
THE UK'S BIGGEST UNOFFICIAL GAMECUBE MAG!
NGC
ISSUE #80
MAY 2003 / £3.50
100% UNOFFICIAL
INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING
VIEWTIFUL JOE
WE'VE PLAYED IT! All the juicy details on Capcom's superhero stunner…
ZELDA: WIND WAKER
IT'S HERE! We go hands-on with the UK version of Nintendo's finest hour!
BURNOUT 2
FOUR WHEELS GOOD! Read the exclusive review of the fastest game alive. It's brilliant!
PLUS! CONFLICT DESERT STORM
Improved for the Cube! Review inside
future games
The first choice for gamers
gamesradar.com
MAY 2003
£3.50
05
9 771475 584012
NINTENDO GAMECUBE



Distributed by






NGC
INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING

30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW
Tel: 01225 442244
Email: ngc@futurenet.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTIONS & DISTRIBUTION
Future Publishing Ltd, FREEPOST BS4900, Somerton, Somerset TA11 7BR.
Tel: 01458 271184

Distributed through the UK newstrade by Seymour Distribution, 86 Newman Street, London W1P 3LD.
Tel: 020 7907 6000

Overseas distribution by:
Future Publishing Ltd. Tel: 01225 442244

Printed in the UK by TPL Ltd









TURN TO PAGE 28
For the first ever playtest of Capcom's *Viewtiful Joe*!

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!
Go to page 100, where cash gets you three free issues and a free joypad, when you subscribe to **NGC**!

MISSING LINK

This issue of **NGC** will be on sale when one of Nintendo's biggest ever games, *The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker*, is released. So why no big review? Because although Nintendo, bless 'em, managed to get us an English-language copy of the game in time for deadline, we simply weren't able to spend enough time with the game to enable us to write a proper review. So, in a turn of events redolent of when we reviewed the almighty *Ocarina of Time*, way back in issue 23, we're offering you a preliminary hands-on report this issue, before delivering an enormous, definitive review next month.

VIEWTIFUL!

Our cover-stars this issue show just how valuable third-party games are to Nintendo. *Viewtiful Joe* is a joyous laugh-out-loud evocation of your wildest superhero dreams, couched in the simplicity of a scrolling beat-'em-up. And *Burnout 2*, previously a big hitter on the PS2, is simply an exemplary racing game, thrilling and genuinely excellent. Both titles prove that, while it's the first-party exclusives that make Gamecube unique, third-party games play a hugely important part in the console's success. Especially given that, as we head past *Zelda* and into the summer, first-party exclusives are beginning to look pretty sparse…

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

Oh, and finally, you might have noticed something different about this issue of **NGC**. Yep, it's a bit smaller. While the larger size made the mag pleasingly individual, it was apparent that it wasn't too convenient (especially for humble Earth letterboxes). Let us know what you think at the usual address. See you next month!

Jes Bickham
Editor
ngc@futurenet.co.uk





WHAT'S IN THE MAG?





VIEWTIFUL JOE

Do everything a superhero can!

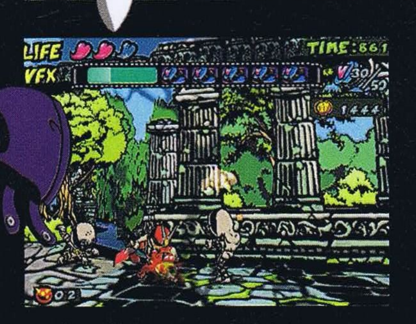
BURNOUT 2

Our exclusive review of the best racer on Cube.



NGC's mascot is not a woman to be trifled with, as these easily-dispatched goons can testify. She's also not a particularly good loser, as Geraint can also testify. He beat her 3-1 at Smash Bros the other day and isn't finding the catheter too comfortable.

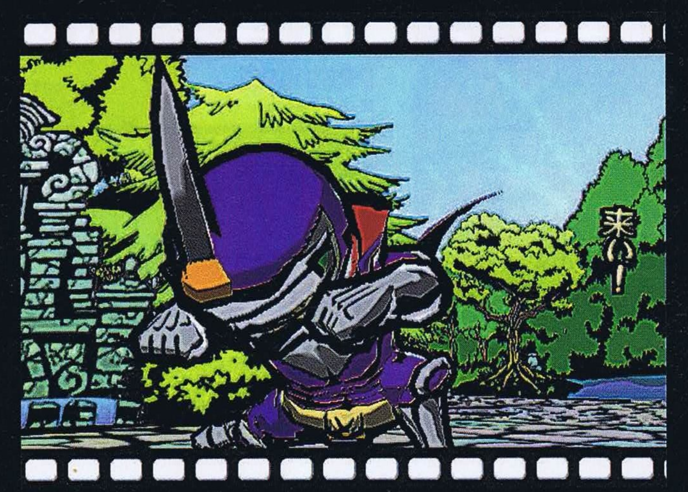
PAGE 28







VIEWTIFUL JOE



THAT WAS... VIEWTIFUL!

Thought games were getting boring? Capcom's latest is here to change your mind. Join us we play their superhero stunner...



ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER

We've got the English-language version of the new *Zelda*! Cor!



CONFLICT DESERT STORM

Brilliantly strategic soldier sim – reviewed!

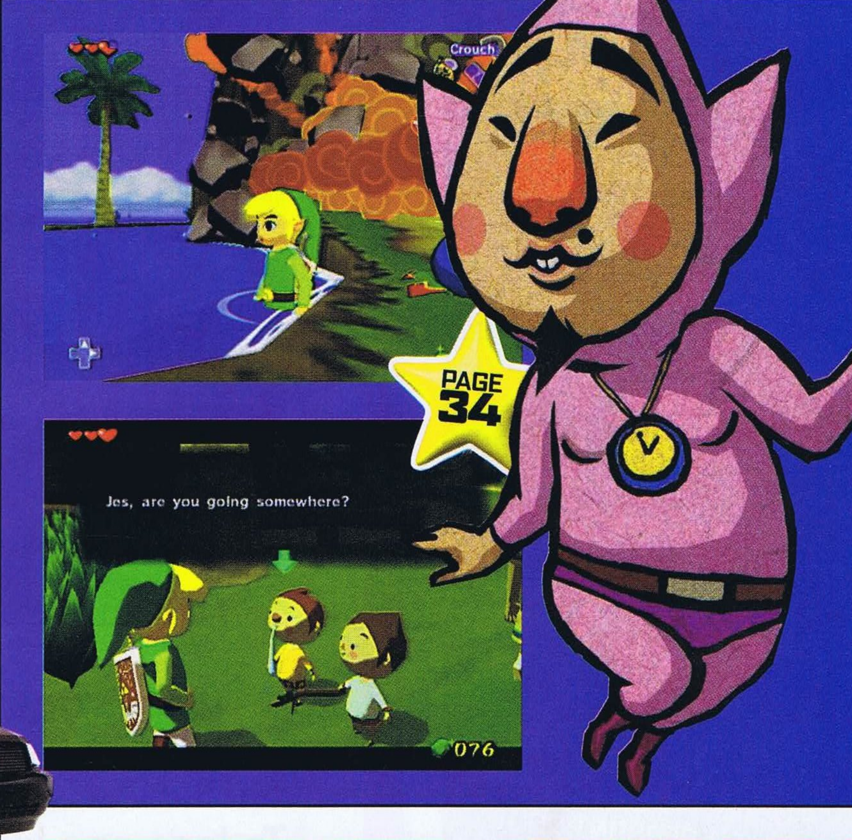
4
PAGE 52



MASTER QUEST

The rejigged *Ocarina of Time*, free with *Zelda: The Wind Waker*...



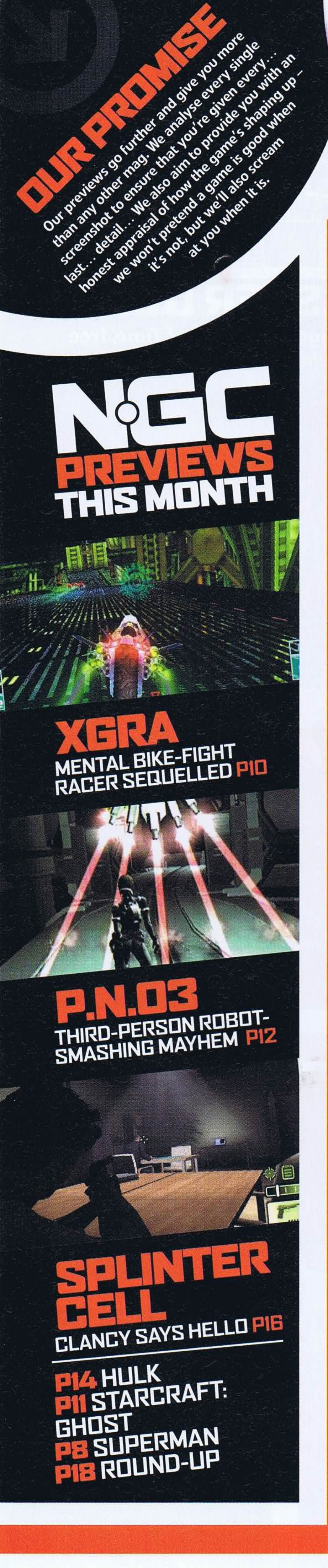














△ You can just about see a great big dragon thing over the other side – going and killing him is optional, but the rewards are great.

LOST KINGDOMS II

To lose one kingdom is unfortunate. To lose two kingdoms is just plain careless.



The first *Lost Kingdoms* game was rightly heralded by us as something of a sleeper hit. One of those things that snuck up on you, it was pretty much guaranteed to be better than you thought it would be, even if it was only by a little bit. In fact, it was really little more than a jazzed-up fantasy card game turned into an action-based RPG.

From what we've seen so far, *Lost Kingdoms II* is what every sequel should be – it has taken the original concept, shored up the weaknesses, added strengths, and generally fiddled, twiddled, tweaked and polished what was already there. Textbook stuff, but on the other hand, if the original game left you cold, the sequel is unlikely to set fire to your arse. You know, set fire to your arse in a *good* way…

Graphically speaking, we were very impressed at the level of detail, and the smoothness. The draw distance is considerable, and while the camera isn't exactly perfect, you've probably realised by now that no 3D game has EVER had a perfect camera system, all the time. There's also more plot per square inch, with cut-scenes much more commonly deployed – which is a good thing if you ask us, giving the game a stronger sense of narrative. All the old favourites are back too, including the oh-so-hilarious farting Hobgoblin, the sluggish Mantrap, and so on – but predictably enough, a heap of new cards have also joined the fray, and at least one crucial difference in the way you use them has been implemented.

The basic types of card are still

DID YOU KNOW? Wizards of the Lost Kingdom is a 1985 film directed by Hector 'Barbarian Queen' Olivera. It features a topless mermaid. This is not the game of the film.

I SUMMON THEE!

There are four types of card aside from the elemental system. You'll need to learn which suit different situations to survive.



■ **TRAP** These cards sit in one spot and damage/attract nearby enemies. You can also drop them on pressure-sensitive pads to open distant doors – cunning!



■ **SUMMON** Usually a great beastie such as a dragon, or an elephant (yup) that arrives in a little scene of its own, then damages everything nearby and sods off. Pricey.



■ **WEAPON** These fellas appear in a flash, slice what's in front of you, then fade away. Simple, direct, and reliable, you can usually use them at two or three times over.



■ **INDEPENDENT** The equivalent of a fire-and-forget missile, once they're cast they wander around beating stuff up, hopefully acting with a modicum of intelligence.



Δ This is you. Hello you. The graphics throughout are a real step forward.



Δ Who'd have thought thieves had such a crises of confidence?



Δ Avoid the light, or alarms go off, guards appear, and doors get barred.

BE FREE!

Turning into the Birdman means you can fly over water, and from cliff to cliff, without fear of falling off and getting splatted. You can transform back as soon as you hit the other side, so as not to waste the card's power. The Stone Golem can smash through icy barriers with ease, and is hard as nails to boot, and the Hellhound can jump up to higher platforms to reach hidden chests.

Trap, Independent, Summon and Weapon, and it all works in the same way as before. Create a deck of 30 cards using ones you earn, buy, or evolve, constantly customising it, creating new decks when you get enough cards, and so on. This time, however, some cards actually allow your character to transform directly into the creature for a limited fight. You get new attacks to use, but also abilities like the Birdman's flight (actually more like a slow hover, but it can get you to otherwise inaccessible areas), and the Hellhound's jump. It adds an entirely new strategic dimension to the levels, which could get repetitive in the original game.

The only real worry we had with this preview code is that, while everything else felt pleasingly complete, we just couldn't save it. At all. We're sure this is just a technical oversight, or maybe just the very last thing they'll put in the finished code, and that in the release version you'll be able to save on the world map as per usual, though. It'd be damnably tough going otherwise…

> **"IT'S TAKEN THE ORIGINAL CONCEPT, SHORED UP THE WEAKNESSES, AND POLISHED WHAT WAS ALREADY THERE"**







Δ The areas you visit and attempt to conquer are pretty obvious.



Δ Stats galore! A bit much to take in at first, but you'll learn…

NGC VERDICT

It's a great update of a solid game, and all kinds of spiffy improvements make it an excellent prospect for fans of the original. You can't quite shake the feeling that it's a minigame from a 'proper' RPG expanded to bursting point, though. It marries the potentially dry, number-crunching, stat-based decks with some very pretty arse-kicking action, and it's fun revisiting sites to find stuff you missed, but by its very nature the gameplay is limited. Completists will devour it whole, as will those who love to customise stuff.





UK MAY | US MAY | JAPAN MAY

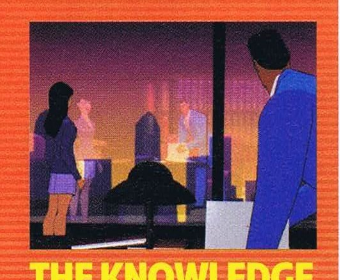
WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

- More cards than you can shake a wizard's knobbly staff at, giving you vast potential for customising decks.
- A proper plot that you can understand, and feel involved in. It's an RPG, so that might be tricky…
- Lots of cool puzzles featuring the new ability to fly/jump/whatever.

ANTICIPATION RATING







THE KNOWLEDGE

- 15 "enormous" levels, with the emphasis on interactive. You can pick up and use many of the objects that are just lying around.
- Legendary villains Livewire, Parasite and Metallo all make an appearance – and Metallo is voiced by Malcolm *Wing Commander IV* McDowell. Though you can't tell.
- Cel-shaded visuals mirror the TV show's look brilliantly.
- Over 40 minutes of cut-scenes.
- Fight, fly, pick up and throw, creep around – you can do it all!

FACTFILE

Who's making it?
Infogrames Sheffield House

What have they done before?
Micro Machines (NGC/79)
Not bad Gamecube recreation of slightly tired racing series.




△ It's all kicking off now! Supes looks on as Luthor's army of robo-nutters creates havoc.


△ Better get your fingers ready – here you have to batter the buttons in order to plug up areas of the dam.


△ More dam action, but this time *on the ground.* The radar provides a useful way of pinpointing danger.

SUPERMAN
SHADOW OF APOKOLIPS

Thought you'd seen the last of Clark Kent with the execrable *Superman 64*? Think again…


You can't keep a good Superman down. After headlining what can only be described as one of the worst games ever made, The Man of Steel returns in this far more impressive action-adventure-flight sim based on the largely excellent animated series.

Cel-shaded to better reflect the visual style of the TV show, *Shadow of Apokolips* (snigger), sees Supes having to contend, once again, with evil mastermind Lex Luthor. (There doesn't appear to be a maze to solve yet, but we live in hope.) All across Metropolis, scientists are being stolen by deadly assassin Kanto, and you soon find out why. Luthor is using them to create an army of – wait for it – Inter-Bots. Er, right.

Ignore the story and get to work on the game and you soon discover that there's a neat sense of scale to this new Metropolis. The textures are fairly bland but they reflect the look of the show well, and the 15 different locations promise to show off some tidy architectural design.

Gameplay is divided between time as Supes, and time as spoddy journo Clark Kent. Unsurprisingly, the man in blue and red has most of the more interesting missions, with fights, throwing stuff and flying the mainstays. Clark's are more subtle, with a few interesting stealth twists – but don't go expecting *Hitman 2*.

The only problem at the moment is that the controls are a bit wobbly. They'll certainly take a bit of getting used to, and when you pick things up, sometimes you can't work out how to put them back down again. Eventually you work it out, but it's not as natural as we'd have liked.

We'll have a full review of the brilliantly named *Apokolips* soon…

> **"ACROSS THE CITY, SCIENTISTS ARE BEING STOLEN BY DEADLY ASSASSIN KANTO TO CREATE AN INTER-BOT ARMY. ER, RIGHT"**


△ Superman vs Livewire! Best course of action? Chuck a barrel.

NGC VERDICT

There are some nice touches in this new Super-game. The visual style is consistent with the TV show, and there's a real sense of scale and freedom. We also like the fact that the missions are broken down into Kent and Superman levels. But there are some niggles too: the controls aren't yet good enough and some of the levels are just brainless button-bashers.



UK	US	JAPAN
25 APRIL	TBA	UNLIKELY



ANTICIPATION RATING







DID YOU KNOW? In the original script for Superman II, the film was supposed to end with the death of Lois Lane. Producers went cold on the idea before shooting began, though.


IN THE DROME...
EVERYONE LIVES FOR RACING.
DROME RACERS
• Play against up to three friends
• 18 tracks across 6 futuristic locations
• Experience Dragster Racing as the ultimate speed challenge
• Featuring 7 amazing power-ups and 8 different cars
GAME BOY ADVANCE
DROME RACERS
LICENSED BY Nintendo
THQ
LEGO
GAME BOY ADVANCE TM
www.LEGO.com/Interactive
LEGO, the LEGO logo and the brick configuration are trademarks of the LEGO Group. © 2003 The LEGO Group. THQ and the THQ logo are registered trademarks of THQ Inc. All rights reserved. All other trademarks, logos and copyrights are property of their respective owners. TM and ® are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2003 Nintendo.
THQ
www.thq.co.uk

HIGH-SPEED SUPER SEQUEL

Acclaim let us into their studios for an extensive playtest on this sleek-as-you-like bike racer…



△ Start to take damage and the HUD flickers, with individual displays malfunctioning.



△ Different weapons are available for different bikes. You power them up in three stages.



△ The tracks are as well designed as you'd expect from an *Extreme G* game.



THE KNOWLEDGE

- The fourth instalment of Acclaim's *XG* racing series, *XGRA* is now taking itself more seriously – the XGRA itself is a futuristic racing association in the vein of the FIA.
- Goes back to many of the original's best features, with difference in bike handling and improved weapons.
- Enhanced team-based gameplay, with rivals fighting each other and competing teams, and poaching team-mates.
- Greater emphasis on characterisation. Unique individual racers boasting hundreds of speech samples and specific animations.



△ Acclaim are going for grittier visuals this time, and far more varied environments. There are also different types of terrain to race on…



△ The track surfaces are also varied. Some are rollercoaster affairs like you'd expect, others will be flat, fast-as-you-like speedways.

FACTFILE

Who's making it?
Acclaim Cheltenham

What have they done before?
Crazy Taxi (NGC/67)
Old taxi-driving title with a 'Crazy' theme. Now relegated to the status of a *GTAIII* minigame.



△ There will also be a far more involving aspect to the races…



△ …you'll receive updated details that require you to fulfil tasks…



△ …like wiping out rival racers or, even better, destroying…



△ …scenery such as billboards or even factory complexes.



XGRA

Bigger, faster, longer, harder…

After spending a day checking out the title at Acclaim Studios in Cheltenham, we have to say we came away quietly impressed with this.

Aware of the competition, Acclaim Cheltenham have taken great pains to differentiate their bike-racer from AV's high-speed stunner *F-Zero*. In a bold leap for the series, *XGRA* is touting itself as a futuristic *F1*. No longer just a straight-up sequel, *XGRA* will be a more comprehensive racing experience, with teams of individual racers boasting detailed characterisation and greater level of depth in terms of bike handling and tuning options.

The game will also allow racers to enter championship seasons, requiring you to take on different objectives and contracts in each race. Completing these successfully means your character will gain in experience (increasing various race-enhancing statistics) and better teams will attempt to lure you away mid-season.

It all amounts to a more coherent racing 'world' and a level of involvement that takes it beyond *F-Zero*'s race-focused arcade gameplay. More as we get it…

NGC VERDICT

Still some way off completion, *XGRA* is already looking the business. With *F-Zero* in direct competition, Acclaim are really pulling out the stops with this one – the design of the tracks is, as always, exemplary, while the game's atmosphere has been meticulously realised, offering more depth to the bikes' handling and more involvement in the events that surround the actual races. The weapons have also been made more accessible and tactical – righting one the biggest criticisms levelled at the *XG* series so far.



UK SEPT | US SEPT | JAPAN SEPT

WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

- More pack-fighting in races. *XG 3* was great, but all too often you found yourself racing on your own.
- More tracks. Again, the previous game was over waaay too quickly.
- More speed. *XG 3* was blistering, but with wider tracks, this has the potential to be even faster…

ANTICIPATION RATING






4

DID YOU KNOW? Acclaim Cheltenham have recruited many of the staff who worked on *Wipeout* to help improve and refine their next *XG* instalment.



Δ Nova slips behind enemy lines on the Protoss homeworld. Careful, now.





Δ Engaging a cloaking device to outwit a Protoss patrol-thing.

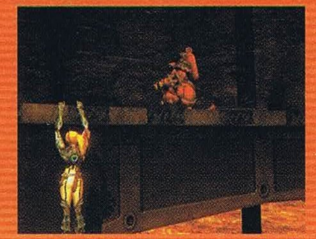




Δ Nova's rifle has different uses, all of them deadly.

Δ The Terrans, being relatively weedy, have plenty of mechanical aid – like this battle suit.





THE KNOWLEDGE

- Play as Nova, a 'Ghost' operative in the far-flung future. Kind of like a lethal secret agent with psionic powers and big frickin' guns.
- Set in the *Starcraft* universe, with three distinct races – the adaptable terrans, the gribbly Zerg and the ancient, elite Protoss.
- Third-person adventure, semi-sequel to the real-time strategy PC classic *Starcraft*.
- Nova can do everything Mario can – jump, climb, hang, shimmy, somersault, and more.



Δ The Protoss. Few in number, but nasty.



Δ The environments are pretty impressive.

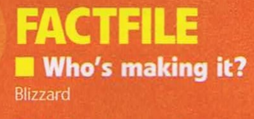
STARCRAFT: GHOST

A girl called Nova and a whole universe of possibilities.

Blizzard popped over to see us this month with the latest build of *Starcraft: Ghost*, and although it's still early days yet, the game's already looking hugely promising.

Stealth is paramount in the game. Nova is out to prove herself as an efficient Ghost operative, and the huge array of different areas the game throws at you – Earth, the Protoss and Zerg homeworlds, and every conceivable environment in between – all have one thing in common; get noticed and you'll be nobbled. You've got a limited-life cloaking device to play with, and a handy meter that lets you know how visible or noisy you are at any time, so you can accurately judge how sneaky you can be at a given moment, and even use the surrounding area to your advantage. For instance, a waterfall masks your clumsy splashing footsteps.

All this stealth-based gameplay and gadgetry is buttressed by some hugely entertaining psychic abilities and weaponry. While Nova's rifle amounts to her entire personal armoury, she can use the power of her mind to slow time down Matrix-style, or shield herself, or any one of a number of tricks. But best of all, she can radio in to a low-orbit support craft and call in some pleasant ordnance. While the subtle delights of a radiation strike or device-fritzing EMP burst are many and joyous, the enormous overkill that is the Nuke has to be seen to be believed. We saw it demonstrated on a level that featured a Starship Troopers-style Zerg attack on a Terran outpost, and it was a few minutes before our jaws could be spooled back up off the lino. Nicely!



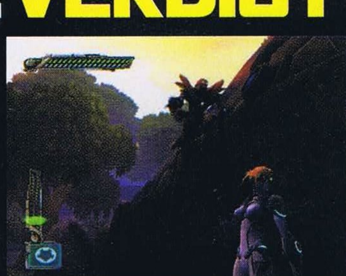
FACTFILE

Who's making it?
Blizzard

What have they done before?
Starcraft
Excellent sci-fi real-time strategy on the PC. Our PC-based sister mags went kerr-azy for it.

NGC VERDICT

Plainly, this is looking hugely promising indeed. While on the surface this is yet another third-person adventure with a female lead, the sheer amount of toys to play with, epic narrative sweep, and intricately-detailed backdrop make this something different. In fact, our only concern at this time is how Blizzard will balance all the various equipment, psychic abilities and nuclear gadgets; there's a lot to play with and it could prove a little overwhelming, ruining any challenge the game offers. We'll see.







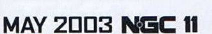
UK	US	JAPAN
XMAS	NOV	TBA

WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

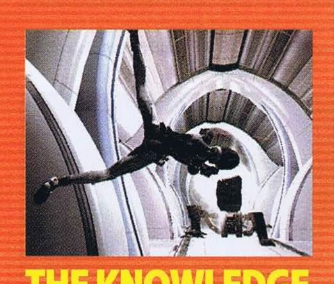
- A finely-balanced sense of progression. Ration the toys out, *Metroid*-style, to keep the sense of discovery exciting.
- Co-operative play. This would be brilliant if two people could play through it together, like with *Halo* on the Xbox.

ANTICIPATION RATING

1 2 3 4 5 — 4







THE KNOWLEDGE

- Take control of the delectable Vanessa Schneider, feared bounty hunter and professional robot-smashing assassin.
- Smart score-boosting combo system that requires you to keep destroying enemies in quick succession before a timer runs out – a little bit like the system used in Sega's *Gungrave*.



FACTFILE

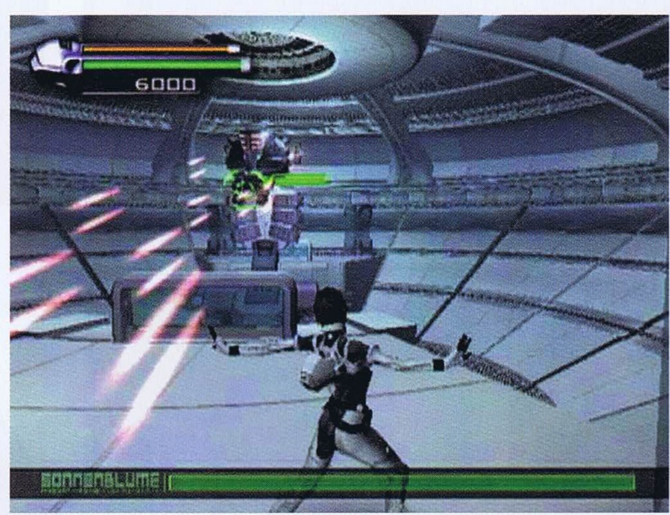
Who's making it?
Capcom

What have they done before?
Resident Evil Zero (NGC/78)
Superb photo-realistic, atmospheric survival horror.





△ Vanessa locks on to enemies automatically so you can concentrate on combos.



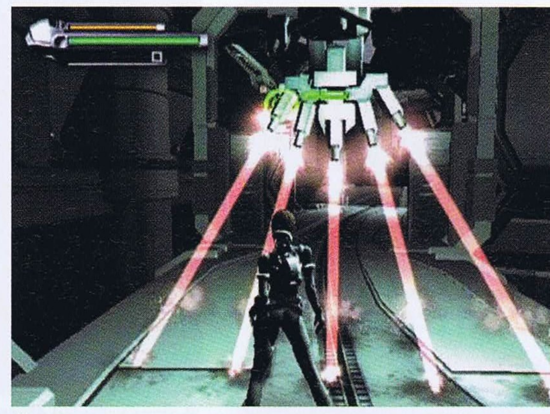
△ Vanessa's gestures are all very flamboyant, lending the game a unique style.



△ The desert is the first level. Your attacks are basic here.



△ Later on, you get more suits with extra powers.



△ Numerous evasive manoeuvres make Vanessa very versatile.



△ Each room is individually scored based on your performance.

P.N.03

Rhythmic, robot-wrecking… What the hell is going on?



Unlike *Viewtiful Joe*, we never really got to play *P.N.03* for long enough to form a decent impression. Still, what we did play we enjoyed a great deal.

You take control of Vanessa, and unlike in our initial expectations the game takes the form of a third-person, free-roaming shooter (we originally predicted an on-rails experience). The opening section we played had Vanessa running around an open desert section attempting to to get to a bunker on the other side of the level. All the while flying drones and gun turrets threatened to take her down. On entering the bunker, we were faced with clinical white rooms and corridors lined with similar robotic enemies.

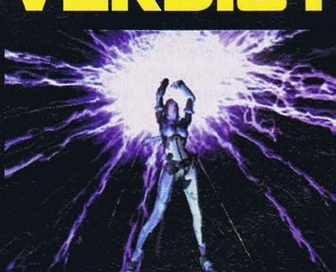
P.N.03 is a straight-up action affair with an emphasis on dodging and blasting, thanks to the way the rooms are designed. Each area has a number of platforms, trenches and barricades to use to your advantage, and the gameplay revolves around leaping, backflipping, cartwheeling and crouching between them, firing your energy weapon as you go.

Vanessa can also utilise special attacks (input via stabs at the D-pad) in order to increase her combo meter, which requires you to kill enemies repeatedly within a strict five-second window.

Strange, but alluring all the same.

NGC VERDICT

P.N.03 doesn't play like you'd think – we can tell you that much. And we'd be lying if we said we weren't just a little bit confused. You see, Vanessa is constantly 'dancing' – leave her idle and she bops away on the spot. Quite why is anyone's guess, and as yet there doesn't seem to be any kind of rhythm aspect to the gameplay. Furthermore, Vanessa has done away with her gun. Instead, she now blasts energy beams out of her hands, with orb-like pick-ups being used to charge her attacks. Intriguing to say the least…





UK	US	JAPAN
TBA	TBA	27TH MARCH

WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

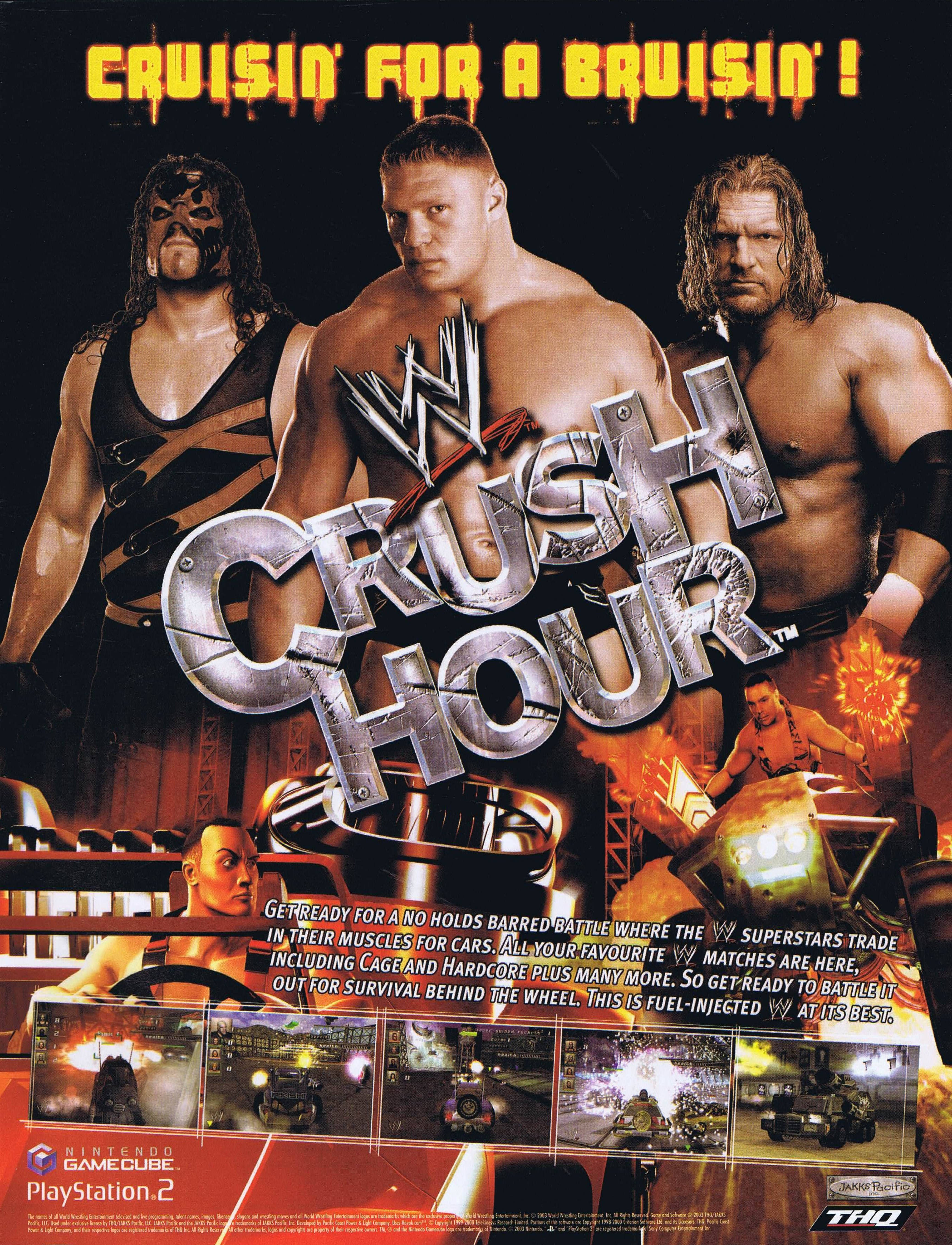
- More textures and an improved frame-rate. The game seemed a little choppy considering there wasn't an abundance of detail.
- Tighter control. Maybe it's just through a lack of the game's mechanics, but *P.N.03* was pretty unintuitive to play at first…

ANTICIPATION RATING






DID YOU KNOW? *P.N.03* is being produced by the same guy who created *Resident Evil* – Shinji Mikami.


CRUISIN' FOR A BRUISIN'!
CRUSH HOUR™
GET READY FOR A NO HOLDS BARRED BATTLE WHERE THE W SUPERSTARS TRADE IN THEIR MUSCLES FOR CARS. ALL YOUR FAVOURITE W MATCHES ARE HERE, INCLUDING CAGE AND HARDCORE PLUS MANY MORE. SO GET READY TO BATTLE IT OUT FOR SURVIVAL BEHIND THE WHEEL. THIS IS FUEL-INJECTED W AT ITS BEST.
NINTENDO GAMECUBE
PlayStation 2
JAKKS Pacific
THQ
The names of all World Wrestling Entertainment televised and live programming, talent names, images, likenesses, slogans and wrestling moves and all World Wrestling Entertainment logos are trademarks which are the exclusive property of World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc. © 2003 World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Game and Software © 2003 THQ/JAKKS Pacific, LLC. Used under exclusive license by THQ/JAKKS Pacific, LLC. JAKKS Pacific and the JAKKS Pacific logo are trademarks of JAKKS Pacific, Inc. Developed by Pacific Coast Power & Light Company. Uses Havok.com™, © Copyright 1999-2000 Telekinesys Research Limited. Portions of this software are Copyright 1998-2000 Criterion Software Ltd. and its Licensors. THQ, Pacific Coast Power & Light Company, and their respective logos are registered trademarks of THQ Inc. All Rights Reserved. All other trademarks, logos and copyrights are property of their respective owners. TM, ® and the Nintendo Gamecube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2003 Nintendo. "PS" and "PlayStation 2" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

HULK SMASH!

We've been messing around with the latest preview version of the game, which already boasts a full set of cut-scenes and levels in place. The team at Radical Entertainment are currently putting the finishing touches to all the bits that need them.



THE KNOWLEDGE

- Thirty levels of Hulkage.
- Two types of gameplay – sneaky stealth with Bruce Banner, or noisy demolition with the Hulk.
- Pick up and throw pieces of scenery, cars and even people.
- Use anything that comes to hand as a weapon.
- Sonic Clap and Gamma Slam attacks can be used to stun enemies at a distance.
- Rage Mode special moves.
- High-quality cinematics featuring actors from the forthcoming Ang Lee movie.

FACTFILE

Who's making it?
Radical Entertainment

What have they done before?
The Simpsons Road Rage (NGC/68) 52%
Not the greatest Gamecube heritage. They were responsible for *Dark Summit* too.



△ It would be great if Hulk screamed obscenities in a Mickey Mouse voice while doing this.



△ Mind the helicopter blades, Hulk. They'll ruin your beautiful institutional haircut.



△ Bruce isn't as good with his fists as Hulk, but he's brilliant at hiding like a total wuss.

HULK

But will you like him when he's Bruce Banner?



He's the biggest, toughest, meanest 'humanlike creature' ever to walk the planet. His skin is green, his best trousers are completely ruined, and somebody has given him the most embarrassing bowlhead hairdo ever devised. He's one angry Hulk.

And since anger is what makes him the way he is (an unstoppable wrecking ball of a man), it's best to stay in his good books. Poking him with sticks is not recommended, and sending the army after him will get you nowhere.

But underneath it all, he's a decent bloke. Bruce Banner, nuclear physicist, became the Hulk when he accidentally copped a massive dose of gamma radiation from an experimental weapon. On the run from the authorities who seek to capture him for their own purposes, Bruce is unable to control the sudden transformations that send him from human form into a 7ft tall, green lump of muscle, weighing more than 70 stone. For a man accustomed to avoiding attention, Bruce doesn't make such a great job of it in this game, which is divided into stealth and combat levels.

The stealth sections are where Bruce infiltrates laboratories and strange installations in search of a cure for what ails him. At the end of every one he's rumbled, his anger rises and he turns into the Hulk, for a few more levels of destruction.

The Hulk levels look likely to be the most fun. However, when sneakery is required, it's more of a token effort. Hide behind boxes, or stand in a corner where the guards can't get hold of Bruce, and they'll

RAGE ON

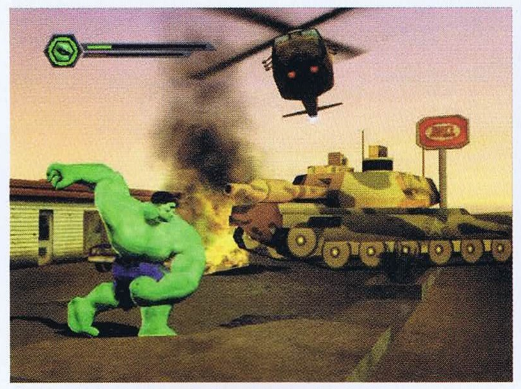


The more he fights, the stronger Hulk becomes, although it's inevitable that he'll take some damage during the non-stop combat because of the number of enemies attacking at once. When they vanish, each one leaves behind a little ball of energy for Hulk to replenish his health and add to his rage meter. When that's full, he can really start cracking some heads.

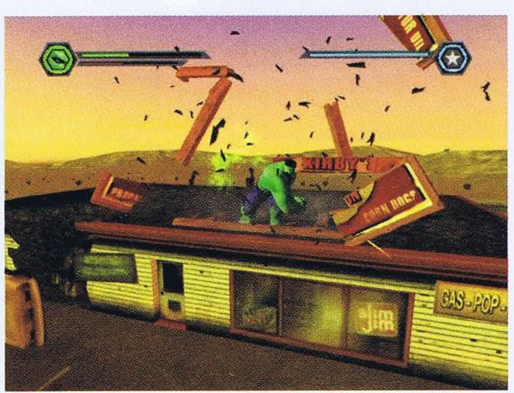
DID YOU KNOW? The Incredible Hulk first appeared in 1962, and (being a fugitive) is listed as having 'no fixed abode'. He's a tramp! A tramp!


△ Preparing to crush another puny human. Shame they don't splatter on the floor like over-ripe tomatoes though.


△ Clap your hands and pop people's eardrums from a distance.


△ Punch the tank's missiles right back into its own gun.


△ Build up that rage meter and start smashing stuff.


△ Smash! That'll teach them for running out of Snapple.

MR ANGRY

Banner doesn't appear to do any in-game Hulking-out, at least not in the levels we've played so far. Instead his transformations are done during the cut-scenes, presumably for artistic effect. And they're certainly nicely directed. Very stylish.

soon lose interest and wander off.

It's a completely different game when Bruce turns green though. There's a wealth of smashable items to be found in every room, most of which can be picked up and used to crush puny soldiers into the ground, or chucked at larger threats such as bosses and helicopters.

When there are no objects left to destroy, the soldiers themselves can be picked up and tossed around like rag dolls. A simple targeting system enables easy selection of the closest threat, and a simple tap of a button sends a person hurtling into a chopper's rotor blades, which is strangely satisfying.

While Banner can only kick and punch like a girl to evade capture, Hulk can leap high into the air and slam down to earth with ground-shattering impact. He can also clap his hands to produce a concussive sonic wave, or throw a ball of energy that scatters soldiers like he's kicking a pile of leaves.

It's a kind of 3D reworking of the old side-scrolling beat-'em-up style of game. Hulk moves from room to room, happily smashing things to pieces while being assaulted by an endless swarm of enemies. Banner sneaks around, trying not to be spotted and solving simple puzzles on the computer terminals that he needs to unlock.

The game will be launched to coincide with the release of the highly anticipated Ang Lee movie which, we're assured, bears no resemblance to the 1970s TV series.

This summer is set to be a Hulk smash! Probably.

"MOST ITEMS CAN BE USED TO CRUSH PUNY SOLDIERS WITH, OR CHUCKED AT LARGER THREATS"



NGC VERDICT

We've played a version that looks very close to being a finished product, and there's definitely potential for a cracking movie adaptation here. Throwing things around in a Hulk-style temper tantrum is fun, but the Bruce Banner stealth levels don't really seem to be anything to do with the same game. They're also very easy, with poor AI from the guards 'searching' for the elusive scientist. Give us a bit more Hulking and a smarter twist on Bruce's scenes and we could have a decent companion piece for the film.

UK	US	JAPAN
JUNE	JUNE	TBA

WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

- A user-controllable camera. At the moment the camera just moves along preset lines, and doesn't always manage to give the most helpful view.
- The human enemies who can stun Hulk with a cattle prod need to be removed. That's just silly.

ANTICIPATION RATING



The Gamecube version of *Splinter Cell* has taken a bit of a back seat to the original Xbox edition and PS2 conversion. But now its release is approaching, we hope to review it within the next few months, when we'll see just how it stacks up to the other versions.

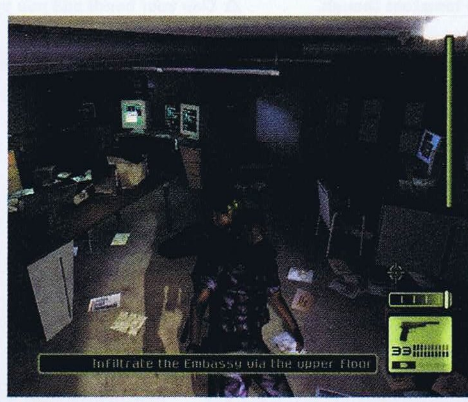


THE KNOWLEDGE

- Third-person stealth action game set in the tense, politically charged 'Clanciverse'. Previous Clancy games include *Rainbow Six*, *Ghost Recon* and *Rogue Spear*.
- Realistic lighting makes every object cast real-time shadows that change as the light source moves – like *Luigi's Mansion*.



Δ See the shadows! Feel the shadows!



Δ Hostage time. Now for the ransom demand…




Δ It's one of the darker games on Gamecube, that's for sure. Dark as a very dark thing.



Δ Mission objectives are updated via the main game screen, so there's no need to keep switching to an info report to find out where Sam is supposed to be heading next.

FACTFILE

Who's making it?
Ubi Soft Montreal

What have they done before?
Batman Vengeance (NGC/67) 70%
Heroic beat-'em-up.

SPLINTER CELL

Tom Clancy goes all sneaky on us in this intriguing anti-terrorist secret-agent adventure…



Ever since *GoldenEye* sneaked up on the world in 1997, almost every subsequent 'real-world' adventure game has included stealth in one form or another.

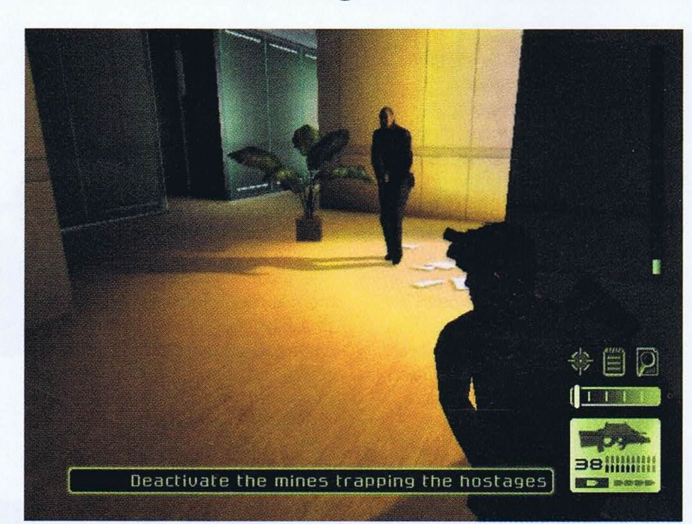
Whether it's something as simple as making more enemies appear if you make a noise, or as clever as having guards follow wet footprints, stealth is even more common than cel-shading.

So it's fair to say that it's going to take something very special to turn heads these days. Something like *Splinter Cell* perhaps?

The game casts you as Sam Fisher, number one operative with an elite 'splinter cell' of the National Security Agency – the people employed to safeguard the US of A by bumping off swarthy foreigners and other such undesirable characters.

As such you're completely above the law, but not quite beyond the reach of the sophisticated terrorist organisations who want to put you out of action in order to mount a massive attack on the free world.

Fisher's acrobatic skills enable him to perform special moves that have come straight out of martial arts movies. If he's confronted with a corridor full of bad guys he can leap up vertically into the splits to avoid incoming bullets, plant his feet on either wall and let rip with whatever



Δ The gauge above the ammo box shows how well Sam is hidden.

△ For some reason the 'contact' doesn't look particularly well. Could it be because Mr Fisher's trigger finger accidentally slipped, thereby unleashing a volley of bullets towards this essential informant? Actually, no. That's not what happened.



△ An unorthodox interview technique, but one that works.


△ Slide, Sam, slide!

STEALTHY DOES IT

Despite wearing a skintight rubber perving suit, Sam still fits some tricks up his sleeve.


■ Night vision. Standard stuff, of course, but here it's done with a kind of grainy monochrome effect for a more unusual look.


■ Splitsies! Actually there are few moments when you really need to use this particular move, but it's great for showing off.


■ Sam's elite training means he can hide behind a corner and stay perfectly still, resisting the urge to straighten crooked paintings.


△ More splitsie action. He'll do himself a mischief.

CLANCY SAYS

All Clancy games have only 'real' weapons, and this one's no exception. Tom won't stand for knock-off ordnance, y'see.

GADGETS



Like bearded world-saver and unfortunate wife-loser Jack Bauer, Sam Fisher's super-secret beyond-the-government security clearance means that he can get hold of the finest gadgets money can't buy. We're talking fibre-optic cameras, thermal targeting scopes and loads more. There's also a gun that shoots a sticky camera onto the wall, which is ideal for looking around corners or keeping an eye on different parts of a level. Once it's fired it can't be retrieved, which just goes to show how wealthy Sam Fisher really is. Cheapskate agents would reuse them. Well, we would, given the opportunity.

realistically modelled weapon he happens to be holding.

Certain parts of the environments conduct electricity, allowing Fisher to fry anyone foolish enough to touch a metal rail or stand in a puddle while the NSA hitman has his taser stun-gun armed. But, of course, the enemies will also be smart enough to take advantage of this little feature themselves.

Fisher isn't restricted to walking on the ground and climbing stairs – he's able to climb virtually anything, allowing the game's designers to include sneakily hidden 'platforms' that blend in with the rest of the backgrounds. You'll have to learn to look at things like drainpipes, window ledges and loose brickwork as important gameplay features rather than just graphical beautification. Fisher also carries a grappling wire so he can dangle from the sides of buildings.

The stealth ingredient comes in the form of a 'visibility meter' which shows how well Fisher is hidden. It takes into account things like shadows, sounds and each enemy's line of sight. The bad guys might not spot him if he's crouching in a dark corner, but if they notice him trying to sneak past a roving spotlight they'll react accordingly – usually by shooting him in the head. Staying well hidden is the most important skill to learn in this game.

Luckily there's no need to blunder into dangerous situations without first checking out the area ahead. Fisher's selection of spy gadgets come in particularly useful for this, as does his ability to peek around corners without revealing his position to the enemies. He can even poke his arm around a corner and loose off a few blind shots when panic becomes the only option.

Unlike James Bond in *GoldenEye*, Fisher won't be punished if a few shots go astray and waste a stray civilian or two. He can use people he captures as human shields, and dispose of them once they've served their purpose.

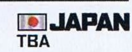
GoldenEye's scientists will never realise how lucky they were…



NGC VERDICT

Stealth action is an increasingly crowded gaming genre, but judging by the original Xbox version, there's plenty of room for a game of this quality. The one thing we're concerned about is the quality of the conversion, particularly the controller setup, and the recent PS2 version suffered from a reduced frame-rate. Hopefully there won't be any problems. After all, this is a real top-notch title and it would be a shame to see the GC version come off second best.



UK JUNE | US MAY | JAPAN TBA


WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

■ A reliable camera system that doesn't get caught up on scenery or inflict too many 'running towards the screen' moments. Early indications suggest a possible jackpot here.
■ A massive *GoldenEye* special of a cheats menu.

ANTICIPATION RATING




4






FINAL FANTASY CRYSTAL CHRONICLES




Four-player action RPG magic…

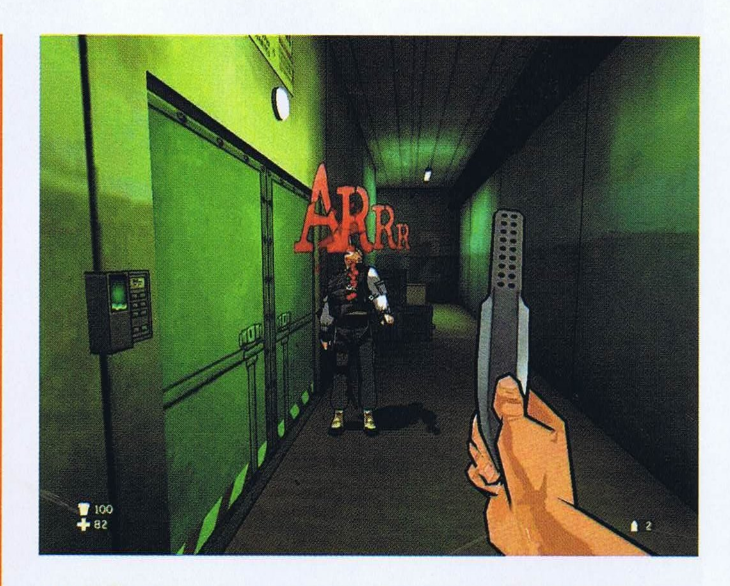

Despite the name, this is about as far from a typical *Final Fantasy* game as you can get (short of a football sim or something like that).

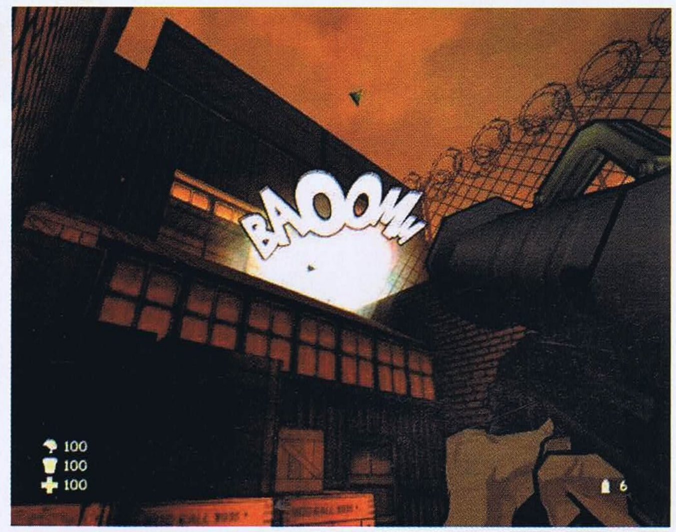
It's all about co-operating with up to three other adventurers to collect the magic crystals needed to cleanse the world of a sinister plague.

Crystal Chronicles can be played entirely via the Game Boy Advance link-up lead so that each player can have a private screen for status displays and messages. It sounds very much like the excellent multiplayer *Four Swords* mode included with the GBA version of *Link to the Past*, except you don't need to buy four copies of the game to play. Just four GBAs.

These latest screenshots show the four-player mode in full effect, complete with *Zelda*-style context-sensitive buttons and heart-containing, er, containers.

It certainly looks promising. The release date is 18th July in Japan, and some time towards the end of the year over here.





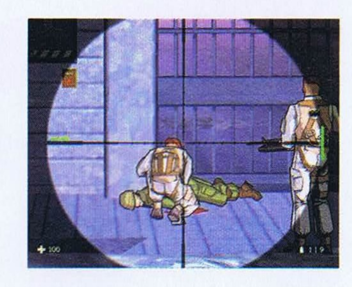
XIII

The sequel to *XII* looks sweet and French.


Who would have thought *GoldenEye* could actually work as a cel-shaded game? But that's the obvious comparison here, and *XIII* (based on the Belgian comic books by Jean Claud Van Hamme, which are yet to be translated into English) looks like it might surprise us all.

It's remarkably bloody too, for such a cartoonish game. You can actually stick knives in people's heads, which is doubly disturbing when accompanied by a piece of Gallic sound-effect text such as 'Crac!' or 'Baoom!'.

Anyway, it isn't out for ages. Not until September at the very earliest. Plenty of time to save those pennies.

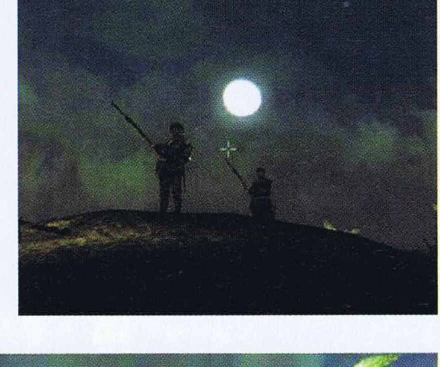




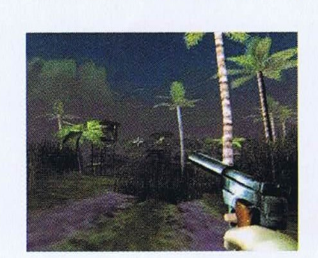
MEDAL OF HONOR RISING SUN

Oh, they're just going to love this one in Japan, aren't they?











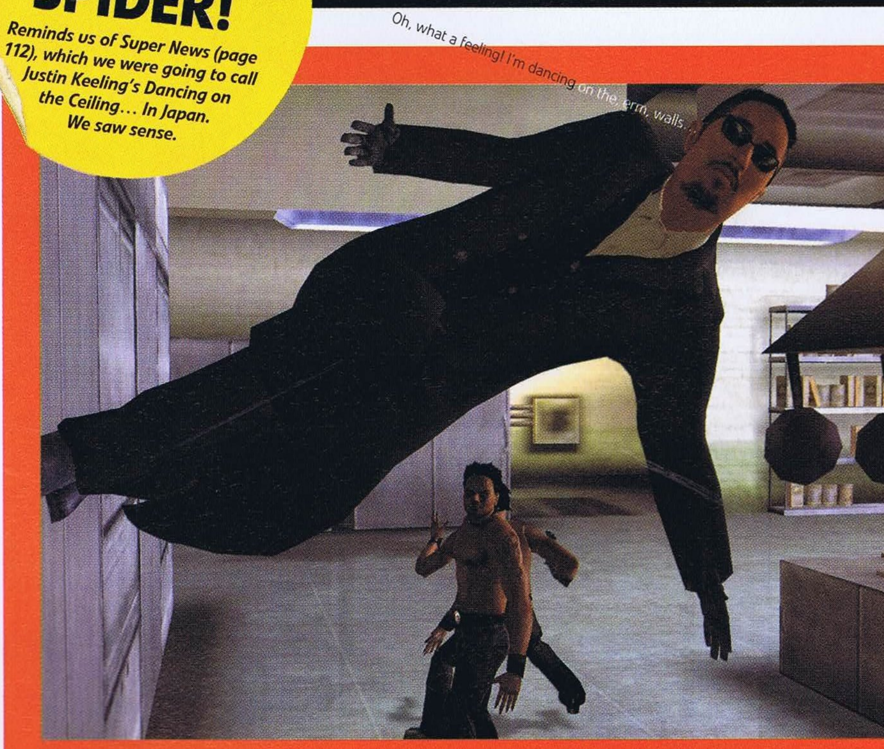
Having thoroughly spanked the Nazi menace in *Frontline*, it's time to have a pop at the Japanese with *Medal of Honor: Rising Sun*, the next instalment in EA's WWII series.

The game follows Corporal Joseph Griffin, a Pearl Harbour survivor, through numerous historically accurate battles across the Pacific. The Griffter, as he prefers to be known, leads the assault on Guadalcanal and eventually winds up rescuing his own brother from a prisoner of war camp. The action ends some time in 1944, so there's no option to bring matters to a fiery end by dropping atomic bombs on various Japanese cities.

There's a two-player co-operative mode, which is something that would have gone down a treat in *Frontline*. Teaming up to fight the enemy with a friend certainly beats going it alone.

Despite being based around guns and bombs, the *Medal of Honor* games have always been strangely bloodless. This is likely to remain the case with *Rising Sun*, which is a shame when you consider how realistic most other aspects of the game are. For *Frontline*, the developers got advice from Steven Spielberg about how to make the D-Day assault scene look authentic. This time they're using a specialist military advisor to provide expert analysis. But no blood.




Oh, what a feeling! I'm dancing on the, erm, walls…





ENTER THE MATRIX

Wall-walking movie mayhem, coming very soon indeed…



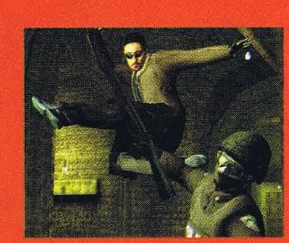
Here's a quick look at the latest version of *Enter The Matrix*, which certainly looks like it's made considerable progress since we gave it the full-on Special Investigation treatment just two short months ago, in issue 78.

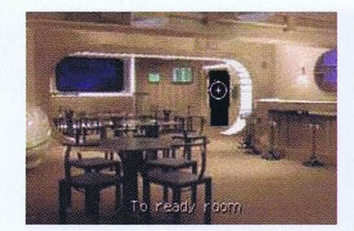
As you can see from these screens, there's a wealth of visual detail in everything from the cars in the driving sequences to the character models in the main third-person levels. Made with with the close co-operation of the cast and crew from the forthcoming Matrix sequels it's going to be the closest (and most expensive) movie-to-game adaptation ever made.

We'll have the UK's first review of *Enter The Matrix* next month, with the game set for release to coincide with the first sequel, The Matrix Reloaded, in May.














WING COMMANDER

Here's a blast from the past for veteran PC gamers. *Wing Commander Prophecy* is an all-new instalment in the long-running space combat epic, presented in glorious 3D on the humble GBA.

While the flashy graphics are obviously a big selling point, the series hasn't survived this long without having what it takes in the gameplay department, and *WC* fans should feel right at home with this miniaturised version. This time there's no Mark Hamill or Malcolm McDowell, who were among the famous names behind the voices and FMV in the previous games, and no Freddie Prinze Jr, who starred in the dire movie adaptation.

But it does have support for four-player space battles, in a *Lylat Wars* style, assuming you've got enough copies of the game. It's out at the end of the month.



KIRBY
NIGHTMARE IN DREAM LAND





Arriving just moments too late for a review in this issue, Kirby's latest adventure should be in the shops right now. As you read this. Yipes!

A quick first play reveals a super-cute mixture of platform-hopping and enemy-gobbling, very much like the last instalment on N64. In this game, you are what you eat, and Kirby can mix and match various abilities by consuming combinations of bad guys. Should be a lot of fun. We'll do a review next month.

POKÉMON RUBY/ SAPPHIRE

Time to dust down the Pokéballs and catch 'em all again...

You just can't keep a good monster down. This one has been a long time in the works, but after shifting mountains of copies in Japan, it's out now in the States and over here at the end of May. New features include secret bases, nutritious Pokéblocks made from blended berries, two-on-two battles, 100 extra monsters, and some interesting link-up options for four players. It's now possible to share personal data, and the TVs in certain houses will broadcast programmes revealing how your friends feel about their Pokémon.

But there isn't even a sniff of poor, neglected Pikachu...

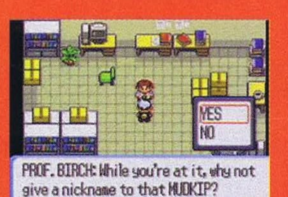


NGC SEE THE LEARNS

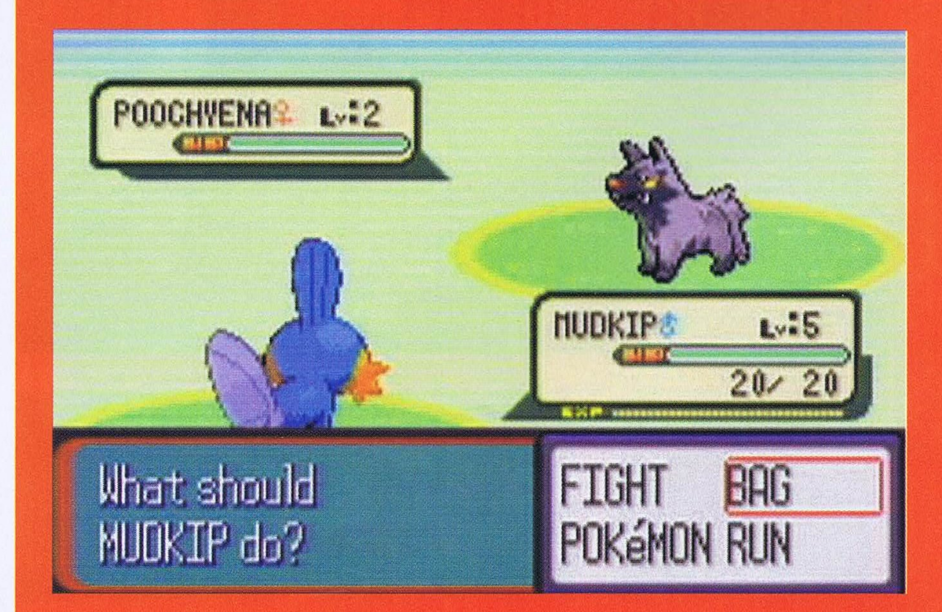
On the back of the US box, there's the following warning: "Basic reading ability is needed to fully enjoy this game." Nice one!











ULTRA RELEASE LIST

The latest on every Cube game in development – updated monthly!

Games come and games go, sometimes without anyone even noticing. But we're keeping our eyes peeled for every Gamecube-related announcement, and whenever anything new pops up or something old gets cancelled, we'll be fiddling with the Ultra Release List to reflect the current state of play. In other words, here's the latest UK Gamecube release schedule. Enjoy!

MAY

Black and Bruised	Vivendi
Burnout 2	Acclaim
Def Jam Vendetta	EA
Enter the Matrix	Infogrames
Ikaruga	Infogrames
ISS 3	Konami
Resident Evil 2	Capcom
Shrek Super Party	TDK
Skies of Arcadia	Infogrames
World Racing	TDK
Zelda: Wind Waker	Nintendo

JUNE

Battlebots	THQ
Dragon's Lair 3D	THQ
Futurama	SCi
Galidor	Lego
Hitman 2	Eidos
Lego Drome Racers	EA
Lotus Challenge	Virgin
Resident Evil 3	Capcom

JULY/SUMMER

D&D Heroes	Infogrames
Gladius	LucasArts
Hulk	Vivendi
The Italian Job	Eidos
Jacked	3DO
Mace Griffin	Vivendi
Splinter Cell	Ubi Soft
Street Racing Syndicate	3DO
Tube Slider	NEC
Viewtiful Joe	Capcom
WWE X9	THQ

3RD QUARTER

Alias	Acclaim
Bionicle	Lego
Bulletproof Monk	Empire
Charlie's Angels	Ubi Soft
Freestyle Metal X	Midway
NBA Jam 2004	Acclaim
Pitfall Harry	Activision
Raven Shield	Ubi Soft
Robocop	Virgin
Soul Calibur 2	Nintendo
Starsky & Hutch	Empire
Tiger Woods 2004	EA
Wallace & Gromit	BAM
Wario World	Nintendo
XIII	Ubi Soft

4TH QUARTER

Bad Boys II	Empire
FIFA 2004	EA
Final Fantasy	Square
Goblin Commander	Jaleco
Harvest Moon	Ubi Soft
The Hobbit	Vivendi
Killer 7	Capcom
The Last Ninja	Studio 3
Power Rangers	THQ
Starcraft: Ghost	Vivendi
TM Ninja Turtles	Konami

TBA

1080° Avalanche	Nintendo
Animal Crossing 2	Nintendo
Backyard Football	Infogrames
Broken Sword	THQ
Crank the Weasel	Midway
Cubix Showdown	3DO
Dead Phoenix	Capcom
Donkey Kong	Nintendo
F-Zero GC	Nintendo
Full Throttle II	LucasArts
Giftpia	Nintendo
Gladiator	Midway
The Great Escape	SCi
Hitman 3	Eidos
I, Gladiator	Acclaim
Kirby's Air Ride	Nintendo
Looney Tunes	EA
Mario 128	Nintendo
Mario Golf	Nintendo
Mario Kart	Nintendo
Mario Tennis	Nintendo
Metal Gear Solid 3	Konami
Metroid Prime 2	Nintendo
Nightmare Creatures	Ubi Soft
Nitro City	Midway
Pikmin 2	Nintendo
Pillage	Zed Two
Project BG & E	Ubi Soft
Rayman Arena	Ubi Soft
Resident Evil 4	Capcom
Rogue Squadron 3	LucasArts
Roll-o-Rama	Nintendo
Starfox Armada	Nintendo
Tak Power of JuJu	THQ
True Crime LA	Activision
Unity	EA/Lionhead
Urban Freestyle	Acclaim
XGRA	Acclaim



OUR PROMISE

We've spent years securing the biggest and best contacts inside the world's most important companies. Our news is properly sourced, expertly written and thoroughly researched – with chicken entrails and everything. You can trust (most of) what you read here. That's why Newsdesk is the most wholesome magazine news service on Planet Earth.

NEWSDESK





GAMECUBE TAKES OFF

UP TO 50 QUID HACKED OFF THE CUBE'S RETAIL PRICE: CONSUMERS RESPOND IN THEIR THOUSANDS... BY GERAINT EVANS



It's been something of a strange month for Gamecube. Early this March, Dixons decided to slash the price of Gamecube to a unbelievably pocket-friendly £99.99, with a free game thrown in for good measure. This one simple move prompted feverish speculation nationwide – in particular, the rather depressing theory that Dixons were going to ditch the Gamecube format altogether. Weeks later things perked up immeasurably – Gamecube had topped the hardware charts with an astonishing number of sales!

Still, at the start of the months things weren't looking so rosy. Dixons (part of the same group as PC World and Currys) account for around 20 per cent of Gamecube sales in the UK. If, as rumours suggested, they had dropped the format altogether, it would have been nothing short of a disaster for Nintendo – sending a message to retailers and customers alike that the console wasn't worth the trouble.

IN THE DOLDRUMS

It's no secret that Gamecube sales, hindered by a pathetic performance over Christmas, have been sluggish. Regardless of the actual figures (which are still under dispute), the general perception was that Gamecube was lagging behind in



CALIBUR EXTRAS
Our prayers have been answered! In addition to Link, Seung-Mina, Sophitia and the bloody pirate Cervantes have been added to the roster.

ROGUE LEADER 3
Factor Five have announced that the work on the sequel to the hugely popular Rogue Leader is now underway – no details as yet, though…

SPRING CLEARING

There has never been a better time to pick up a Gamecube. If you haven't been lucky enough to catch one of the ludicrously cheap Gamecubes sold by the likes of Argos and Dixons, Nintendo are running their own promotions to get punters on board. The first 400,000 people to grab a Game Boy Advance SP for example, will be rewarded with a lovely £30 voucher off the price of a Gamecube.

The current *Metroid* bundle, while having been somewhat undermined by the recent spate of price-cutting is still worth a look and very reasonably priced at £130. Furthermore, Nintendo have a rather tasty European exclusive lined up. Come 3rd May, people eager for *Zelda* will be able to get their hands on a gorgeous platinum Gamecube, a copy of *Wind Waker* and the limited-edition bonus disc featuring *Ocarina of Time* and the *Master Quest*, all in one very tempting little bundle.

Together with Nintendo's newly released budget range, both the hardware, and the current crop of fantastic games are now cheaper than ever. You can't argue with that.

third place. Dixons' price drop came about as a direct result of this – with an eye to re-evaluate the situation once their current stock had sold out. Basically, if Gamecube sold well at the new price, it would be given a stay of execution.

"Nintendo has already seen a 45 per cent uplift in software sales and has also seen a 21 per cent uplift in hardware sales," said an optimistic Nintendo statement released at the time of the price drop. "The current Gamecube hardware price promotions are retailer initiatives and Nintendo is continuing to actively trade with Dixons."

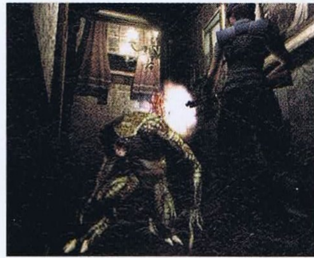
GOING CHEAP

Reassuring yes, but a week later Argos instilled yet more fear into Nintendo loyalists by announcing that they too were following suit in the Gamecube price war.

Undercutting Dixons' generous price drop by over ten pounds they were selling the unit, along with a game, for an astonishing £78.99. That's a full 50 quid cheaper than Nintendo's recommended retail price.

Again, though, this was to be yet another stock-clearing exercise, with a view to re evaluating the situation depending on the consequences of the new pricing. "Sales have been slow so we wanted to speed things up" said Paul Geddes, Argos' Marketing Director. "We haven't yet made a decision on the format". Unsurprisingly, it didn't take long for that stance to change as customers rushed to take advantage of Argos' new offer.

"The demand for Gamecube has been unbelievable," said an Argos spokesperson. "We've been struggling to keep up and have cleared out most of our overstock.



△ Games such as *Resident Evil* have certainly kept up punters' interest…



△ …but Christmas releases such as *MP4* show Nintendo still don't get it.



△ Games such as *Soul Calibur 2* confirm the quality of the Cube's 2003 releases.

It's been an unbelievable increase in demand." Indeed, Argos stated that on an average Saturday they sell around 100 units. Since the price drop, that number has risen to an unbelievable 5,000!

As a result of overwhelmingly positive consumer response, Argos placed another order of Gamecubes from Nintendo – committing themselves to selling the console for the foreseeable future. At the time of writing, we're still unsure whether or not Dixons are following suit, despite their Gamecube sales also showing a similar increase.

THE PROOF IS IN THE PRICING

The biggest shock was still to come, though. Just before we went to press, the actual sales of Gamecube for the week came through. Since the price drop GC sold a staggering 14,000 units – overtaking PS2 for the first time ever as the best-selling console for that period. As a result, Nintendo issued the following statement: "We've had a great week – Gamecube sold around 14,000 units in the UK and on top of that *Metroid Prime* launched at number one in the all-formats charts. Now we're just looking forward to the launch of GBA SP which we expect to be a great success."

What they failed to point out, of course, is that such successes had next to nothing to do with them, and more to do with the work of forward-thinking retailers, promoting the machine without any help from NOE themselves.

Undoubtedly, the incidents of the past few weeks raise pertinent questions about the future of the console. Will Nintendo now concede that a price cut may be a good idea at this time? Will they recognise that their current marketing strategies aren't really working as effectively as they ought to?

Nintendo has been quick to rule out the possibility of a price drop, though. They deluded themselves into somehow thinking that *Starfox Adventures* and *Mario Party* (two completely underwhelming titles) would be sufficient to draw in the Christmas crowds against heavy-hitting games such as *Halo* and *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*. They weren't, and as a result retailers have grown weary and impatient, deciding to take promotional matters into their own hands instead.

> **"SUCH SUCCESS HAS LESS TO DO WITH NOE THAN THE WORK OF RETAILERS THEMSELVES"**

The dramatic drop in price has shown that there is still massive interest in Gamecube, though. *Resident Evil* went straight to number two in the charts, and *Metroid Prime* went on to claim the top spot, putting an end to the depressing software drought. But the price of Gamecube still needs to be right for punters to adopt it.

Dixons and Argos have shown, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that such a strategy pays off great dividends, especially when it comes to getting machines into people's homes – the most crucial aspect of making ground in any 'console war'. Why can't Nintendo do the same?

Regardless, here's to Gamecube's continued success…

SHORT CUTS



ZELDA PRE-ORDERS

Anticipation for *Zelda: Wind Waker* has reached an unprecedented level. Gamers across the US have pre-ordered in their thousands. 600,000 to be precise. That's a truly staggering figure – even outstripping *GTA: Vice City* in terms of demand. Amazingly, *Zelda* has only sold around 700,000 units in Japan since its release. But with pre-orders as they are in the US, it wouldn't be unrealistic to suggest that it could well sell that many copies in it's first *day* in the US.

NOTES FROM 'MOTES…

Never one to keep his gob shut, Miyamoto recently talked a little about some of Nintendo's currently unannounced titles. A new *Donkey Kong* game, away from the clutches of Rare, has been moved in-house and is currently under development. He also went on to say that GBA/GC connectivity would play an important part in the games released in 2003. Seventy to 80 per cent of first-party titles will include the feature, with, potentially, *Pokémon Ruby* and *Sapphire* being examples. Pleasingly, he also made a suggestion that, due to the overwhelming success of *Master Quest* in securing pre-orders, Nintendo may use a similar bundling tactic for other games…

GBA SUCCESSOR
NOA confirmed that a successor to the GBA is currently under development. There are no details as yet, so don't expect it anytime soon…

METROID REWARDS
Nintendo VIP members who register Metroid will receive some extra goodies. These include desktop wallpaper, a postcard, a screensaver, a calendar, a decoration (?), stickers and a T-Shirt transfer (it's just a JPEG that you have to print onto transfer paper). Proof that Greener is indeed a cheapskate after all… Cheers!



DISAGREE WITH MOST WANTED? Then email us at **ngc@futurenet.co.uk** or write to us at **NGC**, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW and tell us the three games you're most looking forward to. Every month, we'll tally up the scores on the doors and change the list accordingly.



The 25 games you want more than any others. Most Wanted, see? Clever…



1 THE LEGEND OF ZELDA

Not much longer to wait until the English version is released here. And don't forget to pick up a GBA lead as well, so at least one of your friends will have something to do other than stare, goggle-eyed, at snotboy and his incredible, elastic nose-ribbon. It's all so much more fun when you understand what they're saying.

UK: 3RD MAY | US: NOW | JAPAN: NOW



2 ANIMAL CROSSING

UK: TBA | US: NOW | JAPAN: NOW

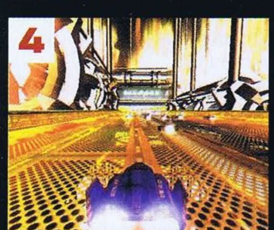
There are real-life animal crossings you know. Tunnels for hedgehogs and frogs, so they don't get pancaked on the roads. Strangely, the people who make them are surprised when the animals don't know how to use them, and get squashed anyway. Fools.



3 MARIO KART

UK: TBA | US: TBA | JAPAN: TBA

Wobbly around the waist he may be, but stick him in a kart and he still zooms as quickly as the lightweight, diet-conscious Peach. And who, out of the two of them, has the most fun? Peach, constantly slaving over a hot oven, or Mario, gorging himself on cake?



4 F-ZERO GC

UK: TBA | US: AUGUST | JAPAN: MAY

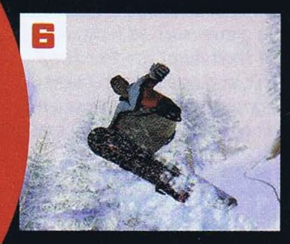
Someone once called *F-Zero* a '1000mph traffic jam' due to the large number of vehicles and high speeds involved. But technically that's incorrect. Traffic jams move very slowly, while *F-Zero* does not. Such illogical jokes do not compute. Malfunction!



5 MARIO GOLF

UK: TBA | US: JULY | JAPAN: JULY

Interestingly, the golfer's warning cry of 'fore' was originally a military expression. When soldiers were arranged in lines to shoot at the enemy in sequence, the officers in the back rows would yell 'beware before' (ie, 'duck or you'll get your head blown off'), or just 'fore!'



6 1080° AVALANCHE

UK: WINTER | US: 2003 | JAPAN: 2003

You know when you see surfers on the telly making out like they're tough because they dare to ride some massive offshore wave that they get dropped onto by helicopter? We're not impressed. Let them try surfing on an avalanche. That'd sort the men from the boys.



7 HITMAN 2

UK: JUNE | US: JUNE | JAPAN: TBA

Delayed by just a tiny bit, so that they can make it even nicer. The rumour that you'll be able to dangle people out of windows and shake them until their guns fall out of their pockets is, sadly, completely untrue. And not even a rumour, since we just made it up.



8 SOUL CALIBUR 2

UK: AUTUMN | US: AUTUMN | JAPAN: NOW

We've been chatting with the game's director, who told us that he wanted to bring out Link's 'inner pirate'. This was to be achieved by having Link yell phrases such as 'shiver me timbers' and 'avast, ye landlubbers'. Sadly those spoilsports at Nintendo said "no way".



9 ENTER THE MATRIX

UK: MAY | US: MAY | JAPAN: TBA

So if Neo is The One, the living god of the Matrix, how will he get into any scrapes in the next two movies? He isn't the main character in the game because he's too powerful. Maybe they'll 'forget' they made him fly at the end of the first film.

THIS MONTH

We've got a final preview of *Enter The Matrix* over on page 19, and there's some exciting news about the game on page 99. We're reviewing it next month, see? We're reviewing some other games too, but this is The One.



#	Game	Description	UK	US	JAPAN
10	WINNING ELEVEN 6	The best football game ever.	TBA	TBA	NOW
11	MARIO TENNIS	Fat plumber/tennis action.	TBA	TBA	TBA
12	SPLINTER CELL	Stealth, the Clancy way.	SUMMER	SUMMER	TBA
13	STARCRAFT: GHOST	Stealth, the Starcraft way.	XMAS	XMAS	TBA
14	VIEWTIFUL JOE	Hardcore platform fighting.	SUMMER	SUMMER	MAY
15	STARFOX ARMADA	Foxy fun, on GC and AC.	TBA	TBA	TBA
16	RESIDENT EVIL 4	Real-time survival adventure.	TBA	TBA	TBA
17	DRIVER 3	Cars, cops and criminals.	TBA	TBA	TBA
18	KILLER 7	Blood-soaked anime action.	TBA	TBA	WINTER
19	PIKMIN 2	Now with two players.	TBA	TBA	TBA
20	WARIO WORLD	I'm-a gonna weeen!	SUMMER	JUNE	JUNE
21	THE HOBBIT	Orcs and dwarves, you know.	TBA	TBA	TBA
22	KIRBY'S AIR RIDE	Back from beyond the grave.	TBA	TBA	TBA
23	P.N.03	Dancing and shooting.	SUMMER	SUMMER	NOW
24	DEAD PHOENIX	Very much alive, thanks.	TBA	TBA	TBA
25	RETICENT EVIL	The quiet man of horror.	TBA	TBA	TBA

WRITE TO… MAILBOX/NGC/30 MONMOUTH STREET/BATH/BA1 2BW OR EMAIL NGC@FUTURENET.CO.UK


This will need a huge amount of work before it looks Cubeworthy.

MOTHER LOVE

Six years in the making, is HAL's lost RPG making a comeback?

We ought to report ourselves to Correction Corner for this. After predicting in last month's issue (bottom of page 102) that the legendary cancelled N64 game *Mother 3* would not be resurrected on Gamecube, it seems that there's now a chance of it appearing in some form.

Known as *Earthbound* outside of Japan, it's part of an RPG series that was popular on the NES. These days the lead character, Ness, is best known for his role in *Smash Bros*, where a handful of other *Earthbound* oddities, such as Mr Saturn, also put in an appearance.

Since *Mother 3*, which was supposed to use the 64DD disc drive add-on, has had close to six years of development time already, Nintendo must have thought it would be a shame to waste all that hard work. Although they must have had a good reason for cancelling it in the first place.

If it does exist, expect the first sighting at the E3 show in May.


Eagle Land, home of Ness.

MAKING THE CONNECTION

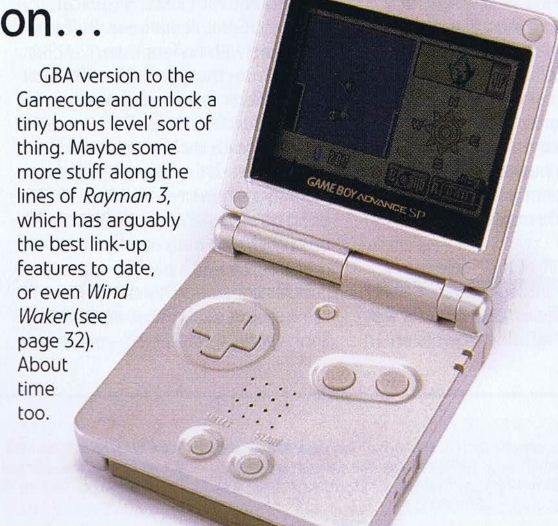
Nintendo and EA put their innovating hats on…



Last month Shigeru Miyamoto revealed that Nintendo was working with Electronic Arts to develop innovative ways to utilise the rather underused GBA-Gamecube link-up feature.

This was confirmed when EA announced that at least four of the company's 20 upcoming titles, including the 2004 versions of *Tiger Woods PGA Tour, Madden NFL* and *FIFA Soccer*, would include 'extensive' GBA connectivity.

Shigsy himself has been providing 'input' on various technical matters, so we can expect something a bit better than the usual 'connect the GBA version to the Gamecube and unlock a tiny bonus level' sort of thing. Maybe some more stuff along the lines of *Rayman 3*, which has arguably the best link-up features to date, or even *Wind Waker* (see page 32). About time too.



LAKITU'S LENS

SEEN MARIO WHOOPING IT UP ON THE JERRY SPRINGER SHOW? PEACH ARGUING WITH JUDGE JUDY? TELL LAKITU!





FAIR TO MIDDLING

Gareth Goddard, from East Molesey in Surrey, was watching the brilliant Malcolm in the Middle (season four, an episode called Forwards Backwards, to be precise), when he spotted walking disaster zone Dewey playing with a GBA. And that's it. Great story, Gareth! Have a free game.

WRITE TO LAKITU'S LENS, NGC, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW

Our favourite entry (with photo or video evidence) will win a Gamecube game

MOTO MADNESS

What does MX stand for, then? In the world of bikes, we always thought it was motocross, but not any more – it's just Metal X, as in *Freestyle Metal X*, Midway's new biking and stunting game.

We're told it features a seamless world in which you can ride from one level to the next without loading, and an unlimited combo system. There are also bonus events including bus-jumping, the Wall of Death, motorbike pinball, and something in which you must ride off the side of a cliff and into a giant dartboard. We'll have a proper-sized preview for you soon!



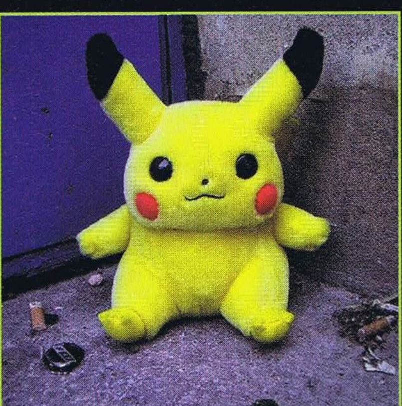
Vroom! See how tiny the people below are. That's because they're actually pixies, just two inches tall.

VIRTUAL REALITY



NINTENDO GAMING MOMENTS 'COME TRUE'.

THIS MONTH Pokémon is back, but where is Pikachu hiding?



THE TEST
They seek him here, they seek him there. But only one magazine managed to track down Nintendo's fallen mascot. In an alleyway behind a pub, at 10am on a Tuesday morning.

RESULT
Oh, Pika.



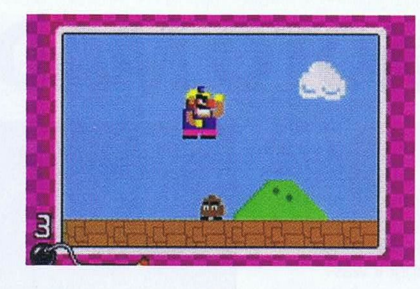
SHORT CUTS

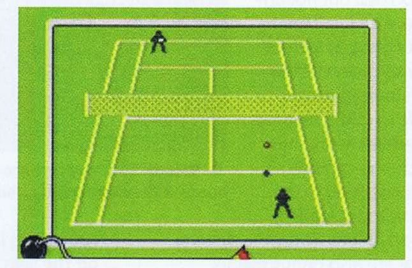
NINTENDO CLEANS UP

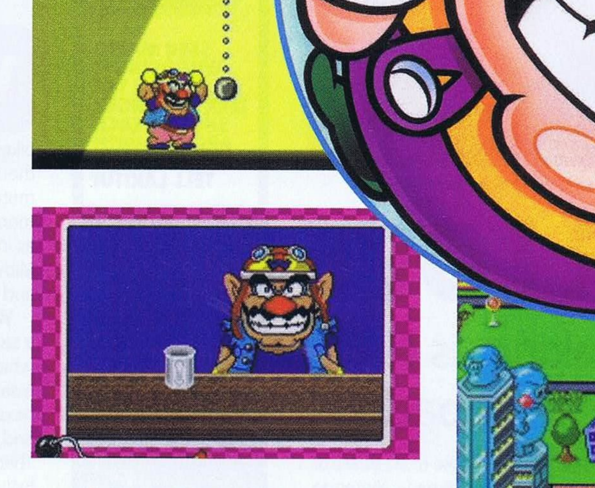
At this year's annual Game Developers Conference, Nintendo managed to pick up a fair share of the awards. *Animal Crossing* won the award for innovation, while *Metroid Prime* and Retro Studios secured gongs for Excellence in Level Design, Rookie Studio of the Year, and Game of the Year. Lastly, a Lifetime Achievement Award went to the late Gunpei Yokoi (inventor of *Metroid* and the Game Boy). Sega's Yuji Naka was on hand to present the award to his family.

GBA PLAYER ARRIVES!

We got one in and it's nice. REALLY nice. Unfortunately it came the day before deadline so we didn't have the time to go into too much detail. But we can tell you that it works with PAL Cubes (with a Freeloader and an RGB cable). If you can't wait for a European release, get one from CA Games (www.cagames.co.uk) - it makes *Mario Kart Advance* far more playable!







MADE IN WARIO

△ Each of these buildings holds a scenario that involves around 15-25 minigames thrown at you every five seconds.

Is this the most insane game ever to come from Nintendo? Answer: Yes.



Insane isn't the word. Completely and utterly bonkers is close, but still not quite there. *Made in Wario* for GBA is nothing short of manic. In essence it's about 200 minigames in one. All of which are divided up across ten different scenarios. Nothing particularly strange there, you might think. But these minigames are properly mini. We're talking a-few-seconds-long mini. You barely have enough time to see them before your whisked off to the next game.

How does all that work, then? Well, naturally, the minigames are very basic. They need nothing more than a couple of stabs at either the D-pad or the buttons. You're given no clue as to what you have to do, you just have to use your intuition. In one game, for example, you have to stab A to get a moving hand to pick a nostril. The next game might have you firing missiles at mother brain for three seconds, or fitting three falling *Tetris* bricks in an indicated spot.

Whether you're successful or not, the game moves you forward to the next slice of insanity at a blistering pace. Fail to grasp what you have to do in too many games instantly and you'll fail, which means you have to go back to the start again. Be successful, and you'll have to play the final, slightly longer boss-game to finish the section.

It's sounds mad, and it is. Words can do this game's insanity justice. It's like nothing we've ever played before. An entirely original concept based on nothing but a players reflexes and intuition. *Made in Wario* has been announced for the US as *Wario Ware*, so it's looking good for a UK release…



△ The GC version promises more…



△ …secrets than ever before.

SONIC MANIA

No escape! Sonic games to be force-fed to gamers worldwide…



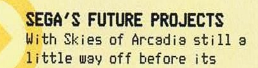
How are you getting on with *Sonic Mega Collection*. Got all the chaos emeralds yet? Remembered how bad *Sonic Spinball* really was? Broken down in tears after bingeing on blue hedgehog-based nostalgia? Well prepared to be pushed over the edge – Sonic Team are gearing up for what they themselves call The year of Sonic.

The first whiff of the Sonic gravy train will come this summer, when Sega unleash *Sonic Adventure DX* – a revamped and refurbished version of the Dreamcast's first *Sonic* outing. Not content with just a graphical overhaul, Sonic Team have stuffed the game with no less than 12 *Sonic* games from the Game Gear. This will include *Sonic 1*, Sonic *Labyrinth*, *Sonic + Tails* and *Sonic Drift*… complete with their sequels.

If that wasn't enough, Yuji Naka recently commented that he'd like to bring out a *Sonic Mega Collection 2*, presumably to mop up any last dregs of the hog's past on less popular consoles. There are also rumours circulating that an all-new Sonic game – *Sonic Hero* – may surface towards the end of the year. Whether this will actually happen is of course another thing entirely, but one thing is certain – Sega are about to start airing a new Sonic cartoon for Japanese audiences (and no doubt US viewers at a later date). It's all a big plan to reinvigorate the Sonic franchise and elevate him back to his original superstar status. Good luck to them, we say…



△ The visuals will also get something of an overhaul for Gamecube.



SEGA'S FUTURE PROJECTS
With Skies of Arcadia still a little way off before its release, Overworks recently announced that they are already well underway with the planning stages of a full-blown sequel to their exceptional RPG adventure. Out Run creator Yu Suzuki also shared a few words regarding the secretive Virtua Fighter Quest. Apparently, the game will have some RPG elements but the emphasis will be on adventuring for the most part. He also went on to say that the game will feature 'super-formed' characters…

WHY DON'T SOME PEOPLE UNDERSTAND NINTENDO GAMES?



△ ***Pikmin.*** **One of the finest games on Gamecube, yet a game only a small number of people have played.**



△ **A superb platformer bristling with imagination and touches of genius, and people STILL complain about it.**

Over the months there's been increasing criticism of Nintendo's software. *Mario Sunshine* was slagged off for being a disappointment by many gamers. More recently, there's been a great deal of dispute as to whether *Metroid Prime* is actually any good. And it's only a matter of time before *Wind Waker* (which has had its share of criticism already) suffers a similar fate.

THOSE AGAINST...

Investigation into *Metroid*'s critics led us to the BBC. Entitled 'Metroid falls short of Prime', The Beeb's review of Gamecube's best game painted a very negative portrait of a title that was widely acclaimed by the specialist press. We contacted the review's author and prodded him to explain why he felt *Metroid* failed to live up to the hype.

"My major gripes were the counter-intuitive, clunky control system, the simplistic puzzles, and the lack of narrative involvement," said the man from Auntie. "The latter is a matter of taste, but the first two points should have been addressed." In fairness, these are criticisms that have have surfaced time and time again in internet forums.

The question is, why the marked difference in opinion? Are we so blind that we can't see the obvious failings in overhyped let-downs?

Let's look at *Metroid*'s controls to illustrate a point. Anyone brought up on the likes of *Half-Life* or *Halo* will undoubtedly ask: 'why can't you look around and walk around at the same time?' It's true – playing *Halo* with *Metroid* controls would be daft. But this isn't *Halo*, and the controls are like that for a reason. If, for example, you had to fight *Metroid*'s final bosses using manual aiming, having to jump and cycle through weapons and visors simultaneously, you'll understand why the controls are the way they are. It's to break the mould. To innovate and toy with people's preconceptions about the way games *should* be. Ultimately, it's so they can deliver an experience that *isn't* like *Halo*, to allow for scenarios and experiences that wouldn't be possible if the game played according to convention.

> **"THE QUESTION IS, ARE WE SO BLIND WE CAN'T SEE THE OBVIOUS FAILINGS IN OVERHYPED LET-DOWNS?"**

If anyone came to *Zelda* expecting an RPG they'd be disappointed. "Why doesn't the elf's tunic have a +7 modifier?", or "I've killed all these monsters and I haven't levelled up yet." Fair comments if you wanted a D&D-style game, but that's not what *Zelda* is. It was never meant to be, so why not play the game for what it *is*, rather than trying to shoehorn in your idea of what you *want* it to be.

NINTENDO REFUGE

At a time where the derivative, over-marketed and ultimately disappointing rule the sales charts, we should be gratefully applauding what is pretty much a consistently fresh output from Nintendo. *Pikmin* and *Luigi's Mansion* are examples of games no other publisher would have the balls to release let alone actually fund in the first place.

So what if a game stars a plumber instead of a gun-toting vampire? It's the experience of play that is crucial, not the persona you adopt to play it. The inability of many gamers to adapt to new ways of gaming gives already reluctant publishers more reason to fear defying established conventions. Understanding this, and consequently relishing in the opportunity to indulge in the new, is the only way games have the opportunity to improve. This is something Nintendo and those who continue to show loyalty to their output understand. This is the reason why we continually champion their games.

So, do yourself a favour – next time you pick up *Smash Bros* try not to waste you time wishing it was a four-player *Tekken*. And more importantly, when you get your hands on *Wind Waker*, try not to wish it had realistic textures. Please? You never know, you might find you start having more fun.

HAVE YOUR SAY, SIR...

Hopefully most of you have had time to work through *Metroid Prime* yourself by now. We'd like to know if it has lived up to your expectations. Did it play the way you thought it would? Do you wish it had dual-analogue control? Do you think it would have worked with a control scheme like the one in *Timesplitters 2*, for example. As much as we laugh about Nintendo of Europe's 'Nintendo Difference' spiel, you can't argue that there's no truth in what they say. What does that difference mean to you? Do you know anyone who wouldn't touch the 'Nintendo Difference' even if it was covered in honey and granted eternal life on contact? (*Come again? – Ed*) Why do you think they feel this way about Nintendo? As usual, vent your spleen at the usual address. Or maybe just write us a letter. The spleen thing is probably quite dangerous.

FINAL FANTASY TACTICS The localisation process is well underway on an English-language version. Importers should be able to pick it up from the US around autumn…

POKEMON CONTROL Following the success of the Animal Crossing eCards, Nintendo are to set up a new division to look after their own Pokémon franchise, more specifically to deal with the trading card aspect of the little critters – formerly undertaken by Wizards of the Coast, responsible for the Magic: the Gathering games.

KUNG-VIEW FIGHTING!

You've seen the screenshots, you may well have caught some videos of Joe in action, and now we've had the pleasure of playing it and describing it to you in meticulous detail. It's a hard life, alright…



VFX METER
This is what allows you to use your special abilities. By holding down the shoulder buttons the game can be slowed down or speeded up. When the meter runs out Joe reverts back to his 'normal' form and is therefore more vulnerable. There's a great deal of strategy involved in choosing when to use VFX and when to stop. Get it wrong and you'll wind up dead.

FILM CANS
These help to boost your VFX meter. Collect 50 and your VFX bar will increase by one block, allowing you to activate your special moves for longer. You'll need to find as many of these as you can before you reach the final boss encounter.

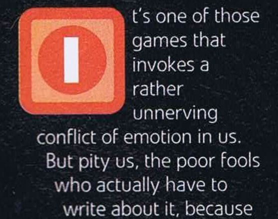
SCENERY
Essentially 2D, but as you can see, the levels travel in and out of the screen, and bend while the camera follows, panning around them. There's always a great deal going on in the foreground and background – here, you get transparent silhouettes of tree shadows scrolling in front of the action. Often, environmental features are the key to progressing.

ENEMIES
From what we played, these were relatively unexciting drones (mixed in with the odd strange-looking mini-boss), alongside a few flying enemies such as bats and helicopter-like bombers. Enemies are quite slow to attack. There's about a five-second delay before they try to hit you, and when they do you get an indication as to whether the attack will come high or low so you can dodge them.

NGC SPECIAL INVESTIGATION

VIEWTIFUL JOE

Kaboom with a view! We spend an afternoon with dinky superhero Joe and his slinky, cel-shaded beat-'em-up. Viewtiful!



It's one of those games that invokes a rather unnerving conflict of emotion in us. But pity us, the poor fools who actually have to write about it, because it means someone else has that crucial window of opportunity to *play* it while we're doing so. Conversely, whoever's playing it knows they are doing so only while one lucky individual on the team has the pleasure of actually conveying to you, the reader, just how… how… unbelievably refreshing it all is.

At a time where tawdry third-party releases and lazy ports seem to be arriving by the truckload, *Viewtiful Joe* plays like a real breath of fresh air. It's so welcome we practically cooked a meal and made a bed for it – not that it was allowed to stay over, mind you. Capcom's demands were that this was to be a fleeting visit only – and we're missing it already.

"AT A TIME OF TAWDRY THIRD-PARTY PORTS, THIS COMES AS A REAL BREATH OF FRESH AIR…"

From the first few (admittedly bewildering) minutes you get with the game you know you're about to experience something special, although you wouldn't think it given the controls. Joe moves from, well, left to right. Standing in his way are platforms, and wave after wave of grey robotic enemies who can be dispatched with either the punch (Y), or kick button (X). The A-button enables Joe to jump, while up or down on the analogue makes him dodge enemy attacks coming at him from high or low. It's nothing special on paper. Even Joe himself is pretty unremarkable – he hasn't even got his special red costume to begin with. You

ENCORE

Each level is actually broken down into little bite-sized nuggets of scrapping, at the end of which you're graded on how well you've fought. The scale ranges from Crappy to Viewtiful, taking into account the speed of your fighting, how often you got hit, and how stylish and efficient your combos were. It's a neat system and is sure to add some replay value as your techniques improve.

TURN OVER
For our exclusive, (and painstakingly translated) interview with the man behind all the madness – Atsushi Inaba…

DID YOU KNOW? Atsushi Inaba's last project was the ambitious robot-battling, massive-joystick-using *Steel Battalion* on Xbox.



△ By activating the Slow VFX, the screen zooms in a little and you can watch Joe deftly dodge incoming attacks.

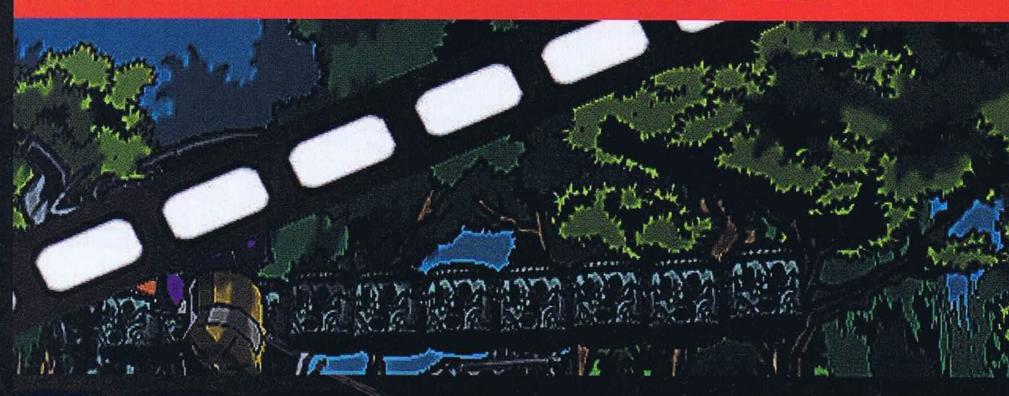


△ Speed-up makes all the on-screen action blur, using the age-old comic book technique of motion lines to add intensity.



△ This is your first encounter with Captain Blue – Joe's mentor in the game...

COMIC CONVENTIONS





It's not just the visuals that are influenced by comic-book art. The sound effects, for starters, are awash with manic smacking noises, energetic voice-samples from Joe himself as he leaps his way around the levels, and some highly amusing dialogue.

The cut-scenes draw heavily from episodic cartoon series, with cheesy, OTT voice-overs or mid-level banter between Joe and his enemies as they goad one another about their imminent destruction. Picture a cross between the old Batman TV shows and something like Thundercats.

There are also constant references to the fact that Joe is in some kind of movie. A clapperboard heralds you starting each level, for example. And if you die, you hear a director's voice shouting "Cut! Cut! Cut!" before you restart the scene again. Weird.

just keep moving left, jumping and attacking. It would seem like your bog-standard, jump-on-platforms-punching-enemies affair from that description – and, well, *it is*. The closest comparison would be the Adventure mode in *Super Smash Bros Melee* – it even has the same 3D-yet-2D feel about it.

Naturally, the first thing to grab you is the supremely striking visuals. It truly looks like nothing else. Everything in the world is outlined and detailed with thick black lines, lending it a 1950s hand-drawn comic-book kitsch, like an early Marvel or DC comic book. The way it layers flat 2D objects and scenery in front of and behind Joe, mixing it up with 3D platforms, chandeliers, barrels and cars which come at you from all angles looks fantastic. The levels aren't completely straight, either – as you progress you'll notice corridors bending away into the screen. The camera bends around with Joe as he turns corners, letting him make his way up and down spiral staircases or around balconies. It works in a similar way to *Kirby: Crystal Shards* on the N64. The end result of all these bizarre visual touches is a uniquely manic tapestry of colours and shapes for your brain to soak in while you concentrate on causing as much chaos and mayhem as possible.

> "LIKE SMASH BROS, VIEWTIFUL JOE IS MENTAL. TOTALLY AND UTTERLY MENTAL. MENTAL!"

In a word, it's mental. Totally and utterly *mental*. Very much like *Super Smash Bros*, the fighting system is deceptively simple. You have two kinds of basic attack – a punch and a kick – and yes, if the mood takes you, you can just button-mash your

DID YOU KNOW? Viewtiful is the name of a holiday home offering fantastic views of the Virgin Islands. It's "super private", and children under eight aren't allowed to stay for safety reasons. Snorkels and umbrellas are provided.



△ The thick black lines add a unique touch to the already stunning visuals. There really is nothing else quite like this available at the moment…

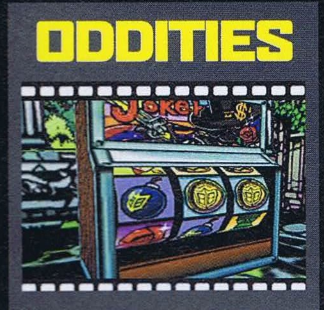

△ Find a switch to drop these chandeliers to ground level…


△ Dispatching enemies like this end-of-level boss is extremely satisfying.



△ You only have three hearts available, (that's your life) so hamburgers are a welcome source of replenishment. These can be found by smashing objects…

ODDITIES


There are some pretty strange moments and delightful touches that often crop up. Take this fruit machine, for example. It marks a battle against a mid-level boss. On defeating him you can use your Slow FX to 'cheat' the machine into giving you power-ups. No doubt there are plenty more of these treats in the game.

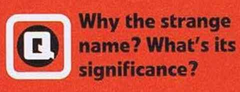
way through the whole thing.

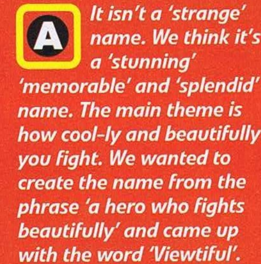
But you soon find there's a lot more substance to the game than that. Down and punch, for example, knocks your opponent up into the air for a second or two, allowing you to juggle them. Down and kick will deliver a sliding attack, while jumping with the attack buttons lets you whip out the usual array of flying kicks and punches.

These are the basic moves (and they don't change much throughout the game), but the clever bit comes from the way in which you deliver them. Above Joe (in the screenshots) you'll see a length of celluloid labelled VFX. This is a meter which

Q&A

Joe's creator Atsushi Inaba discusses all things, um, vright and viewtiful…


Q Why the strange name? What's its significance?

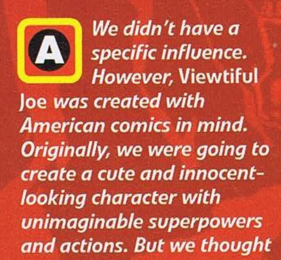

A It isn't a 'strange' name. We think it's a 'stunning' 'memorable' and 'splendid' name. The main theme is how cool-ly and beautifully you fight. We wanted to create the name from the phrase 'a hero who fights beautifully' and came up with the word 'Viewtiful'.

We've focused on finding beauty in fighting, by giving Joe special powers such action as Slow, Fast Forward and Zoom to make you feel like you are actually editing the movie while playing the game. V also stands for Victory, the sign of which Joe wears on his helmet. And VJ means Visual or Video Jockey – a person who can manipulate imagery!


Q Could you explain the game's story for us?


A The main character is Joe, a fanatical film fan. He's on a trip to the movies with his girlfriend Silvia, when bad guys somehow manage to 'escape' from the movie and kidnap her. Hot on their heels, Joe jumps into the world of the movies where he meets his ultimate hero, Captain Blue! Captain Blue sees great potential in Joe and gives him his V–watch. Now Joe can transform into Viewtiful Joe by using his new VFX power and challenge the baddies who have captured Silvia.

Q What were your influences when creating the game? Any particular superheroes or comic books?


A We didn't have a specific influence. However, Viewtiful Joe was created with American comics in mind. Originally, we were going to create a cute and innocent-looking character with unimaginable superpowers and actions. But we thought that would be boring and decided to go for a much cooler approach with Joe.

Hard action and stunning visuals with fluid gameplay was the starting point. The designer, Mr Suekane, mentioned Mike Mignola's design style. I've been a big fan of superheros since I was little, and I gave him my rough mental image of Joe. The fantastic ideas he came back with gave me the inspiration for most of the cast.

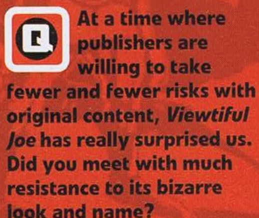

Q How did you arrive at the concept for the game?

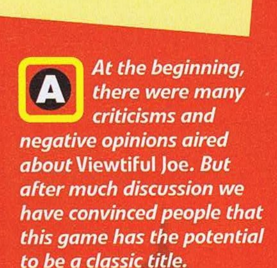

A Viewtiful Joe has evolved many times since we began development. Pause Battle, Rhythm Action, and many other ideas were thought through, but the main concept of portraying beauty in fighting never changed.

We think heroic action and cinematic rendering are things that closely relate to each other. By rendering the image so beautifully, we felt our hero would become stronger, and also cooler! And this is how VFX Action was created.


Q The development teams for Capcom's Big Five are reportedly much smaller than usual. How has this affected development?

A Yes, the game is created by a smaller group of people and therefore the task for each person has been much harder. But the advantage is that the bond within the group is much stronger.


Q At a time where publishers are willing to take fewer and fewer risks with original content, *Viewtiful Joe* has really surprised us. Did you meet with much resistance to its bizarre look and name?


A At the beginning, there were many criticisms and negative opinions aired about Viewtiful Joe. But after much discussion we have convinced people that this game has the potential to be a classic title.


Q What other VFX are included in *Viewtiful Joe*?


A One of the other effects you get is Zoom, which allows Joe to inflict more damage. However, if hit he will also receive more damage than he normally would.


Q How many levels will there be in the final version?


A There are loads of puzzles and gizmos so it should be hard for gamers at first. There will be seven stages in total, and it will take serious time to finish and master this game.

Q *Viewtiful Joe* seems to lend itself very well to survival and challenge modes (such as defeating enemies within a time limit). Can we expect to see such additions to the final version?


A We believe the goal for any game is not just to finish it. The goal should be focused on some other aspects and we feel that replaying the game in order to score a more Viewtiful ranking is an important aspect.

BIRTH OF A HERO

There's work to do before you can become truly Viewtiful…



1 *The game certainly doesn't mess around, giving Joe just a five-second tutorial. Press up: dodge up. Press down: dodge down…*



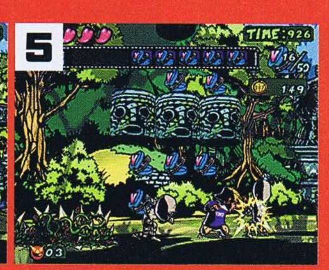
2 *A quick practice is all you get. Once you've had a go, you're thrown straight into the path of some oncoming robots.*



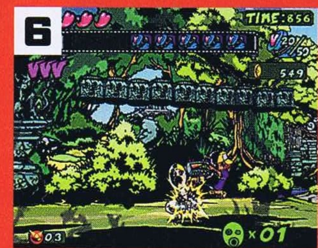
3 *Dodging opens up more fighting options. Look for the little red flash to see where the attack is going to come at you from.*



4 *Avoid it successfully and you not only look the business (giving you bonus points to boot), but you also cause enemies to slow down.*



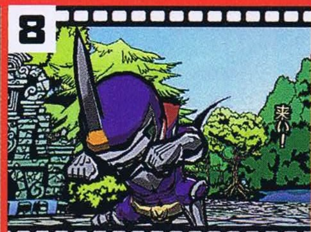
5 *Now you can go round smacking everything you come across. Look out for these film cans – collecting them increases your VFX meter.*



6 *You'll only have a couple of robot-types to attack in Joe's 'normal' get-up. Just get to grips with fighting and dodging before…*



7 *…this snappily-dressed fella floats down from the sky towards you. In a booming voice he tells you of your promotion… to the rank of superhero!*



8 *More or less a blue version of Viewtiful Joe, Captain Blue is your mentor in the game. He also gives you your costume and your first set of powers.*



9 *Of course, you have to fight him first to prove your worth - and it's not easy. Dispatch him by dodging his attacks until he's open to yours.*



10 *Once he's defeated, you finally become Viewtiful Joe. Your first VFX move is slow motion, allowing you to see bullets and dodge with ease.*



△ VFX can also be used to manipulate objects in the levels.

△ The leafy shading you see over the screen adds a level of depth to the proceedings as it parallaxes across. The game has many lovely touches like this.

enables you to fight 'Viewtifully' – in other words, to attack enemies with amazing grace, by dodging, parrying, and delivering super-strength attacks. Once the meter runs out, Joe loses his hero costume and turns back into a normal bloke. He then has to bash his way through more enemies until his meter fills back up. Once that happens, Joe regains his superhero suit and he can use the meter to boost his scrapping abilities again.

It's an idiosyncratic system, and it's loads of fun to use. There's a huge degree of satisfaction to be had from dodging an enemy's attacks, uppercutting anyone unlucky enough to get behind you, and then piledriving a slow-motion punch into the enemy in front, smashing him through the five enemies waiting in line behind. It's so wonderfully intuitive, and everything happens so smoothly, that just watching the on-screen action is as satisfying as making progress through the game. On more than one occasion, we found ourselves just hanging around the opening section of a level to see how many enemies we could annihilate by wanging them into each other, or generally experimenting with Joe's various abilities.

"ONCE THE METER RUNS OUT, JOE LOSES HIS COSTUME AND TURNS INTO A NORMAL BLOKE"

A VIEWTIFUL MIND

Don't be fooled by all that high-speedy, button-mashing battling, though. There are some surprisingly cerebral elements to the game too. These arrive in the form of mini-puzzles that crop up from time to time, requiring you to use your VFX to alter the scenery around you. In one instance, Joe has to unlock a door at the other side of a room. By slowing down time, a droplet from a leaking tap has the time to expand before dropping and weighing down a switch below it. In another section of the level, Joe has to use his speed-up ability in order to burn wooden totems in quick succession that trigger an exit to the area.

Joe's VFX also prove invaluable when dispatching some of the



VIEWTIFUL JOE

Beating seven shades of cel out of goons…

△ Many of the bosses take some time to figure out how to dispatch. It's by no means a breeze to finish, and getting a high ranking will take time.

△ These targets allow you to knock enemies into each other or into surrounding objects. Efficient battling will boost your score.

△ This helicopter is very tough – you'll have to punch it's bullets straight back to win the day. Easier said than done, that…

△ Here's that mechanical cowboy enemy we mentioned elsewhere. The pink flash indicates that he's about to shoot.

SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS

By dodging enemies you force them into slowing down briefly. Activate your Slow VFX at this point and a target will appear over them. Land a punch or a kick and you'll be able to send them flying in any direction, scoring multiple hits on any enemies who get in the way.

FIGHT ME!

Bosses, eh? Whether it's Captain Blue challenging you to a duel, or a mechanical cowboy trying to fill you full of holes, you can guarantee a pretty steep challenge. In one instance, you have to fight off a helicopter that crashes through a stained-glass window and attempts to rip you apart with bullets as it flies around a gigantic mansion hallway. Tricky.

game's tougher enemies, enabling you to see attacks that would otherwise have been too quick for the naked eye. And by speeding up time, Joe can deliver punches and kicks at such a speed that he (and the enemies around him) subsequently catch fire.

FX-ING BRILLIANT!

Take a mid-level boss on the first level as an example. This robotic cowboy character proves extremely hard going, as he can shoot at Joe no matter where on the screen he tries to hide. But by slowing down time at the moment he fires his pistols, Joe can see the bullets and then either dodge them or punch them straight back at their source – giving him a vital window in which to lay back the smack.

Only by experimenting with the VFX that Joe acquires do you start to realise just how versatile this 'basic' scrapper really is. For the one day that Capcom gave us to sit down with the game we barely scratched the surface – mainly because the game is insanely hard in places. Even by the second level, we were finding some enemy encounters to be a real trial – but rarely frustratingly so.

Viewtiful Joe is so mesmerising in its presentation, and so engaging in its design that – as if out of nowhere – it now ranks alongside the likes of *F-Zero* as one our most eagerly anticipated titles of the year. It's certainly one to chalk on your list.



SUPER SEAFARER

Instead of a lush green field, you've got a huge swathe of salty brine to explore, and a whole new world to experience. And the fact that you're sailing across an ocean makes this feel like a very different prospect to previous Zelda games.

LAND AHOY!

Islands dot the whole expanse of the ocean. You'll generally be given hints on where to go next – or at least, which direction to head in – but there are loads of tiny islands that might hide grottos or other secrets. The sense of freedom is dizzying.

DAY AFTER DAY

Just like with Ocarina of Time, the time of day changes as you play – mostly on the ocean, though. And although a given day is quite long, the sun rising is frankly glorious, coinciding with the game's theme tune kicking in. Blissful.



NATURE ATTACKS!

The sea is full of threats, most of which have a specific effect in the game. Whirlwinds will suck you up and deposit you elsewhere, pirates roam the waves, and giant squid and vengeful wind gods pop up menacingly.



NGC SPOILERS!
Don't want to know anything about the new Zelda game? Then don't read any further!

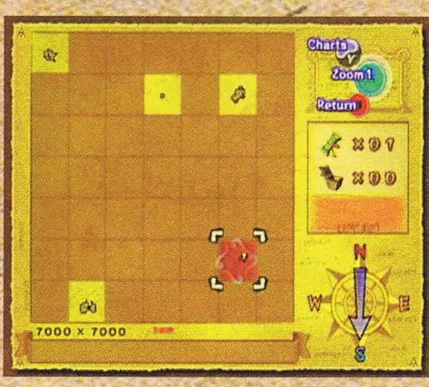
MAPPED OUT

You'll need a map – or sea chart – to find where a particular island is. Luckily, agreeable talking fish, with the help of a little bait, will help you fill in the watery gaps.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA THE WIND WAKER

Better than *Metroid Prime*? Better than *Ocarina of Time*? The new *Zelda* is almost here, but just *how* good is it?

Just a couple of days before this issue of **NGC** went to the printers, Nintendo of Europe pulled one out of the hat and got us an English-language version of *The Wind Waker* – prior, even, to its US release. While we haven't spent enough time with it to offer you a full review in time for the PAL release – and any other reviews you'll have read in other mags will have been based on a scant couple of days' play – we've put in enough hours to bring you this thorough playtest, along with a cautious preliminary verdict, of sorts. Next month, though, we'll have the review to end all reviews, and the only score you can trust…



△ **The old map. Essential for plotting courses and finding what direction to get the wind blowing in.**

DID YOU KNOW? That Link is the best character to be in *Smash Bros Melee*. Kittsy would argue for Kirby, but he's rubbish at the game, so doesn't count.



THE WIND WAKER

First English-language version play – plot secrets revealed!

■ Your grandma. It's genuinely quite sad to leave her, although you do get to revisit later on and help her out. Bless you, Link.

■ Collect three fat porkers for this rotund lady and you'll be showered in rupees and curiously maternal love.

■ Bless the little snot-nosed kid and his stick-holding chum. Who, incidentally, will tell you how to jump. Helpful brat, isn't he?

■ Ain't that the truth. This Mekon-type old-timer is the brother of the sword-training chap in the dojo downstairs. Indeed.

HOME SWEET HOME

Link's island home – Outset Island – is a gorgeous place, home to several different characters who'll give you the basics of control and play mechanics. In particular, the dojo master will teach you swordplay, and dear old nan has got that special green tunic and a familiar shield for you. You'll end up rescuing a pirate and losing your sister before you're on your way.

TURN OVER

For more info on *The Wind Waker's* fat-fairy-based Game Boy Advance link-up feature...

VAIN VESSEL

Once you leave home you're off to the dreadful Forsaken Fortress. After you've visited, you'll be rescued by a mysterious talking boat... you'll awaken at Windfall Island and the first thing you need to do is get yourself a sail, in preparation for sailing the high seas and a date with destiny.

■ Your boat, a wise and imperious character who goes by the name of King of the Red Lions. Yes. Lions.

■ This stranded eskimo will sell you his sail for cash. Luckily, it's just what you need to kickstart your quest.

■ Once you get to Dragon Roost island, your boat will teach you how to use the wind, with this wand.

■ From here on in, it's simplicity itself to manipulate the wind as you wish and go island-hopping.

HANDS-ON!

"The game is set 100 years after *Ocarina of Time*"





BIRD BRAINED

Seen a cave you can't get to, or something else unreachable? No problem! Just pop a Hyoi Pear on the top of your head and transfer your mind to a nearby seagull. Hey presto! You can fly the friendly skies as one of our feathered friends (or 'gutterbirds', as Martin calls them). Brilliant stuff indeed. You can buy the fruits from Beedle's ship shop for a mere ten rupees a pop – or use bait on a rat hole, and the rodent within might have one to sell...





RETURN TO ME

Link's trusty boomerang returns, if you'll excuse the pun. Except now, brilliantly, it can lock on to up to five different targets. There are many puzzles, plus a hugely impressive boss, that take advantage of this in the Mysterious Woods dungeon. Essential for nobbling the annoying helicopter-beasts, too.

TINGLE KNOWS! TRUST TINGLE!

The GBA link-up is brilliant. Once you've freed Tingle on Windfall Island, you can call him up on the Tingle Tuner. With a GBA connected, a second player can move a Tingle icon around, calling the Gamecube player to hidden items and uncovering some himself, bombing enemies, and generally helping out. He can even use his 'balloon' to float Link around. It's great.



■ Tingle. A deeply unpleasant, worryingly camp fellow first seen in Majora's Mask. Still, put up with his pecadilloes, eh?



■ Free the irritating sod from his prison and he'll give you this. You can use it in dungeons for some excellent mate-help.



■ It takes a moment for the data to download but it's worth it. Using bombs costs rupees, so be mindful of money.



■ Unfortunately, the Tingle player is but a flat icon. It would have been great to have a fat man in a jumpsuit floating around.

THE WIND WAKER

First English-language version play – plot secrets revealed!

△ An astonishingly beautiful sub-boss from the second dungeon.



△ Bombs grow freely in the ground and are used to blow up troublesome blocks. Later on you can get a cannon attachment for your boat, which comes in jolly handy indeed.

PEARL'S A SINGER

The first chunk of your quest takes you on a search for three mystical pearls, and incorporates two dungeons and a whole lot of seafaring. The pearls are named after the goddesses from *Ocarina of Time*, and once you've recovered them, you'll have to ferry them to their proper homes. All of this is by way of a prelude to inheriting your true destiny and saving the world from the evil, well, you-know-who.



■ You'll meet this fellow early on, and he's got one of the fabled pearls. What to do?



■ Once you have all three, there are three tiny corresponding islands to search out...



■ When all the pearls are in place, a delightful transformation occurs. Pleasing.



■ We're not going to spoil what happens next. It's sufficiently epic, though...

Part of the delight of playing a Japanese version of a game is the mystery of it all. Since you can't read what characters are saying to you, every step is an adventure, every event a surprise. Playing the same game in English can be a huge disappointment, because clumsy, heavy-handed hints are suddenly thrust upon you, and too much instruction is invariably worse than none at all.

Thankfully, *The Wind Waker* has been the recipient of a mostly magnificent translation. The game positively shines in English; things aren't ruined in any way by a surfeit of unnecessary information, and most of the characters in the game are given a distinct and welcome personality through some excellent writing (see the amusing, whispered asides rendered in small type for fine examples of this). Sure, we've spotted a few 'buddies', and even a 'crud', but even when things veer towards the American, the lines are delivered in such cheerful good humour, and with an occasional rare wit, that it's easy to forgive any lapse. Overall, we'd say this is a better translation than *Ocarina of Time's* – *The Wind Waker*, for example, is refreshingly free of the cringeworthy cod-medieval 'thees' and 'thous' that occasionally plagued the N64's Link-based classic.

> "ON COMING OF AGE, YOUNG LADS ARE EXPECTED TO WEAR THE GREEN UNIFORM IN HONOUR OF OUR HERO"

The game also benefits from a rich seam of background material, now that it's in English. Shigsy's unlikely fascination with Michael Moorcock is apparent in the 'Eternal Champion' rendition of Link, as the 'they're not the same person' idea is made explicit here. In this particular instance, the game is set 100 years after *Ocarina of Time* – we can only imagine that a Waterworld-style disaster happened in the intervening century – and Link has become a legend. On coming of age, young lads are expected to wear the green uniform of our hero, in honour of his reputation – and, would you believe it, this particular young man gets thrust into adventure and battle (against a very familiar foe) on his birthday. And so the legend lives on.

The game itself, of course, is as magnificent as we'd hoped. Everything Zy said in his review of the Japanese version of the game still stands, but now that we're able to understand more of what's going on, we've gained a deeper appreciation of the game – especially regarding the intricacies of the relationships between the various characters, and the many sub-quests and errands that can distract you from the main thrust of events. That said, *The Wind Waker* suffers a little from its familiarity, given that the majority of the play



△ A brilliant bit of kit, the Deku Leaf. Very... leafy. Yes. Leafy. Cough.

TURN OVER

For even more staggering factoids on one of the best games you'll ever play!

DID YOU KNOW? Two dungeons and a whole pile of ideas were excised from *The Wind Waker* due to time constraints. Expect them in a sequel.

HANDS-ON!

"It's colourful, kaleidoscopic, beautiful, warm and wonderful"



△ Ploughing the ocean is initially exhilarating, but becomes a little tiresome, as sea is largely featureless and bland. However, warp-based shortcuts are there for the taking, once you find out how to use 'em...



△ The dungeons feature many *Zelda* staples; chests, lanterns, and big gribbly beasties to slay.



△ The translation appears to be excellent, and in places jolly witty indeed. Pleasing to behold.





DEKU YOU

Another new addition to The Wind Waker is the Deku Leaf. It can be used, brilliantly, in two ways – firstly, you can use it as a huge fan to blow enemies down or propel suspended platforms, or else as an impromptu hang-glider, enabling you to swoop over the odd abyss. You need a big stock of magic power, though.



mechanics have been tarted up from *Ocarina of Time*, and the sea-based overworld can get a little tiring. Sad, but true – it's astonishing at first, and daunting, as there's a whole expanse of ocean to sail over, but until you've found the requisite warps to various islands, the trip from, say, Windfall Island to Outset Island takes literally minutes, which can be boring. But then, you've got sunken treasure to find, sea beasts and whirlpools to contend with, and the changing weather and time of day to astonish you, so perhaps we're being a little harsh. Only time and intensive play will reveal any true faults in the game, which we'll obviously report on in our next issue.

One thing's for sure, though – the game *looks* incredible. If you're not prepared to give it the time of day because of the cartoon style, get out. Go on – vamoose. This is the single most expressive and visually impressive game we've ever seen. It's easy to overlook the quality of the graphics when you're absorbed in playing the game, but take a step back and you'll be amazed. It's like controlling the latest Pixar or Disney animated film – it's *that* breathtaking. From the wobbling jowls of the moblin guards to giant vines erupting from the ground, and the most amazing dust and smoke we've ever seen, *The Wind Waker* is an utter delight to see: colourful, kaleidoscopic, beautiful, warm and wonderful. And Nintendo seem to have raised their game with the humble art of animating their characters too – each movement is imbued with feeling and emotion, be it Link slumping, eyes half-closed, when he's lost significant health, or the prancing, mischievous movements of the cackling imp-things. It's all been engineered to elicit a sense of sheer delight, and we can only wonder where Nintendo will go next with this style. It's just going to be brilliant.

> "TAKE A STEP BACK AND YOU'LL BE AMAZED. IT'S LIKE CONTROLLING THE LATEST DISNEY ANIMATED FILM"

So, then, can we give *The Wind Waker* a cautious verdict? We've played a fair bit of it, but not nearly enough to say for certain just *how* good it is. As we've said, it seems to have a couple of niggling faults, but then, parts of it are far and away the best things we've seen in a videogame for years – and with the staggering brilliance of *Metroid Prime* still burned into our frontal lobes, that's saying a lot. One thing's for sure, though – the coveted title of Best Game on Gamecube hangs in the balance here, and Link could very well snatch it away from Samus' sci-fi grasp. But you'll have to wait until next month to find out, we're afraid...

JES BICKHAM

DID YOU KNOW? In *Ocarina of Time*, you can chop signs into three pieces. In *Majora's Mask*, you can cut signs into five pieces. Useless facts: we love 'em.

OUR PROMISE

Our reviewers are the most talented and knowledgeable Nintendo fans in the business. We don't only play games at work – we play them at home too, just like you. We ensure that we've played games through to the end so that we can give you a proper verdict – and one that saves you from wasting money.

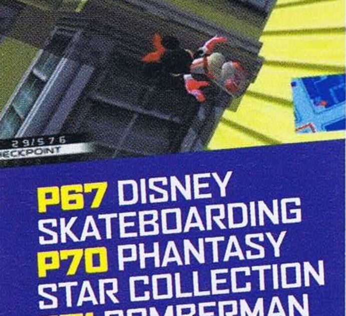
NGC THE VERDICT YOU DESERVE! REVIEWS

IN REVIEWS THIS MONTH



NHL 2K3 ICE HOCKEY, IN DIGITAL FORM ON YOUR TELLY **P48**

FROGGER JUST WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS. POSSIBLY **P58**



WHAT IS PAL?

PAL is the UK's broadcasting standard. When you buy a Cube here it will be PAL. When you buy a Cube in the US or Japan it'll be NTSC – a different broadcasting standard, and the reason the two don't mix. Import games are NTSC games.

BURNOUT 2

The most impressive crashes you'll see in a videogame, and the best racer on Gamecube. Cold, hard fact! **P42**

WARNING! SPOILERS AHOY! OUR REVIEWS CONTAIN SENSITIVE INFO!



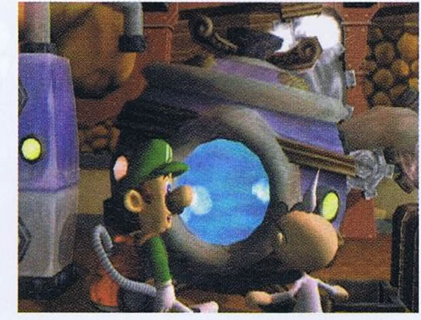
CONFLICT DESERT STORM

Er, watched the news lately? Great, huh? Perhaps this is a little too timely, but it's nonetheless a top-drawer game of soldiers and guns. **P52**



MASTER QUEST

You'll get this free with the limited edition *Wind Waker*. Now that's not bad at all, is it? Good ol' Ninty. **P60**



BUDGET REVIEWS

Smash Bros Melee, *Luigi's Mansion* and *Pikmin* re-reviewed, now that they're all out on the cheap. **P68**

HOW IT WORKS...

Our reviews are the biggest, most comprehensive on Earth. We give more pages to the games you want to know about, and give you more detail than anyone else. Our Field of Play and Event-o-meter regulars pinpoint when and where games get good, and our verdicts are the most honest and stringent around.



IKARUGA

Hurrah! Infogrames release this mental shooter in the UK. It's bleedin' hard, so it is. P50



DAKAR 2

Acclaim's half-decent rally game, now with bikes and trucks as well as cars. Fancy that. P51



1 GET INTO THE GAME

Lost? Confused? Afraid? The quickest and smartest way to get started...



2 FIELD OF PLAY

The game's best bit taken apart and analysed, like an oily motorbike engine...



3 EVENT-O-METER

The good bits, the bad bits, the middling – all in handy graph-form...



4 THE SCORE BAR

The verdict explained for you...

PROS AND CONS

Because we think it's important to provide you with balanced reviews, we'll sum up the game simply with plus and minus points.



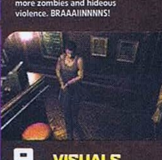
+
- Great.
- Lovely.
- Smashing.
- Super.

–
- Oh dear.
- Tsk.
- Well, well, well.
- Tut tut.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Not all games are good (unsurprisingly) – so you'll be wanting to know what the alternative is. We'll provide suggestions here.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...
Resident Evil Zero
Capcom
NGC/78 85%
Like this game, but with more zombies and hideous violence. BRAAAIINNNNS!



VISUALS AND SOUNDS

Gamecube sends PS2 packing. Do the visuals and sounds show this?

MASTERY

How well does the game make use of the Cube's startling hardware?

LIFESPAN

Will it last you a lifetime or a couple of minutes? Here you'll find out for sure...

9 VISUALS
The very essence of what a great game looks like.

9 SOUNDS
Like having your ears massaged with sonic vaseline. Mmmm.

9 MASTERY
Pushes both technology and design to the limit.

9 LIFESPAN
Lengthy single-player game, deep multiplayer options. Deep!

VERDICT

We don't throw scores around – we give a game what it deserves. Here you will find the definitive verdict on whether you should purchase a game.

VERDICT
Generic Game Description No. 803 is a great little generic game description. Just dandy, and top-hole.



NGC 90

5 OUR SCORING SYSTEM

NGC STAR GAME

0-24	25-49	50-74	75-89	90+
Crushingly awful, massively dull. Rest assured, this is crud.	Disappointing, stashed with faults and likely to be short of any quality.	Some great bits, some not-so-great bits. Decent but definitely problems.	Great fun, brilliantly programmed at times, but probably flawed.	Rarely awarded, you'll know a 90+ is absolutely essential.

MEET THE NGC TEAM

Burnout! The **NGC** team would love to drive dangerously, but they're all idiots.

I wield the power of meat-mutation: Jesbian



JES
"I can't drive, and I'm 30 years old", said ruthless overlord Jes. "Not to worry, though, as Paul and Dan make most excellent palanquin bearers."



JUD
Predictably, talk of driving led to talk of tanks. Soon after, Jud had to go and lie down, after a quick trip to the toilets. "Burble", he burbled.



DAN
"Due to terrible stereotpying, I have never seen a car, and travel by harnessing myself to one of the wild horses that roam the streets of Belfast."



MARTIN
Martin sees the modern automobile conveyance more as an instrument of pain than mobility. "It's like a giant hammer", he explained, helpfully.



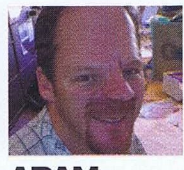
GERAINT
Geraint was too busy chewing a leek and dribbling to contribute constructively to the conversation.



PAUL
Paul's camper van was discussed once again. By Paul. Predictably, we'd all gone home by the time he'd finished rambling on.



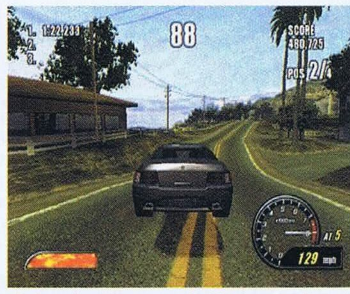
TIM
Bath's Most Local Man hopped off his tractor long enough to start flinging manure around. He had no opinion on Burnout 2, however. Bless.



ADAM
Cuddly ginger love machine Adam winked lasciviously. "Cars, eh? Low ridin', good-lovin', mmm-mmm-mmm, see what I'm sayin', homes?" No.



Δ Oof! Lost an argument with a lorry, there. Very, very nasty.



Δ Leaving the ground adds to your boost level. You need to be going fast, mind.



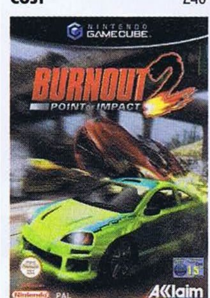
Δ The replays, especially in Crash mode, are top quality. Pity they took out the chance to watch your crashes after regular races.



Δ This isn't a bad little mover, but it pales in comparison with the almighty Supercar.

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	ACCLAIM
DEVELOPER	CRITERION
RELEASE DATE	MAY 16TH
PLAYERS	1-4
MEMORY CARD PAGES	2
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	YES
WIDESCREEN	YES
COST	£40



BURNOUT 2

Faster than a speeding bullet! Ladies and gentlemen, say hello to the best racer on Gamecube…



GET INTO THE GAME

It's as easy as driving a car! Possibly.

OFFENSIVE DRIVING 101

There's a fair bit to remember in Burnout 2, but brilliantly, Criterion force you to take part in the short-but-sweet Offensive Driving 101 course before you can play the game proper. This teaches you the basics of getting boosts – oncoming traffic, catching 'air', near misses and so on – in a lesson-by-lesson format. Great stuff, and getting gold medals means you can unlock a secret car. High-octane happiness unbounded!

CHAMPIONSHIP

The first championship eases you into things properly with a minimum of fuss. The first track, Airport Terminal 3, is a simple loop with little in the way of frustrating crash opportunities, and the wide corners mean that there's plenty of practice for giant, smoking powerslides.

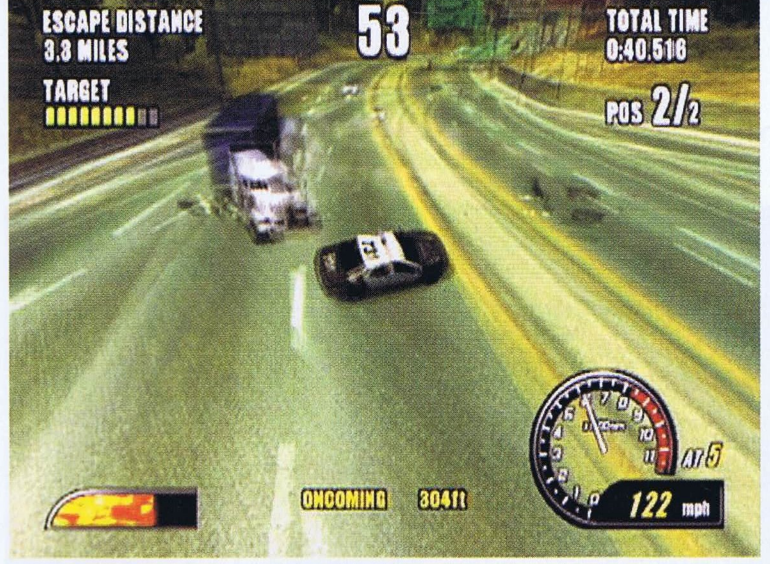




Metroid Prime had us gaping in wonderment and revelling in isolation and exploration. *Mario Sunshine* elicited wall-to-wall grins born of unparalleled freedom of movement. And *Smash Bros Melee* was simply joyous, untrammelled fisticuffs fun, drenched in balletic beauty and poetic acrobatics.

But *Burnout* is downright, astonishingly *thrilling.* It sets the heart racing and the pulse pounding, and it tries its damnedest to make you sweat (which is unfortunate when, say, Geraint picks up a pad to play). And yet it's really little more than a basic arcade racer, at its core. What gives?

The N64, infamously, didn't play host to a top-tier racer until late in its lifespan, when the flawed-but-fun *World Racing Championship* and



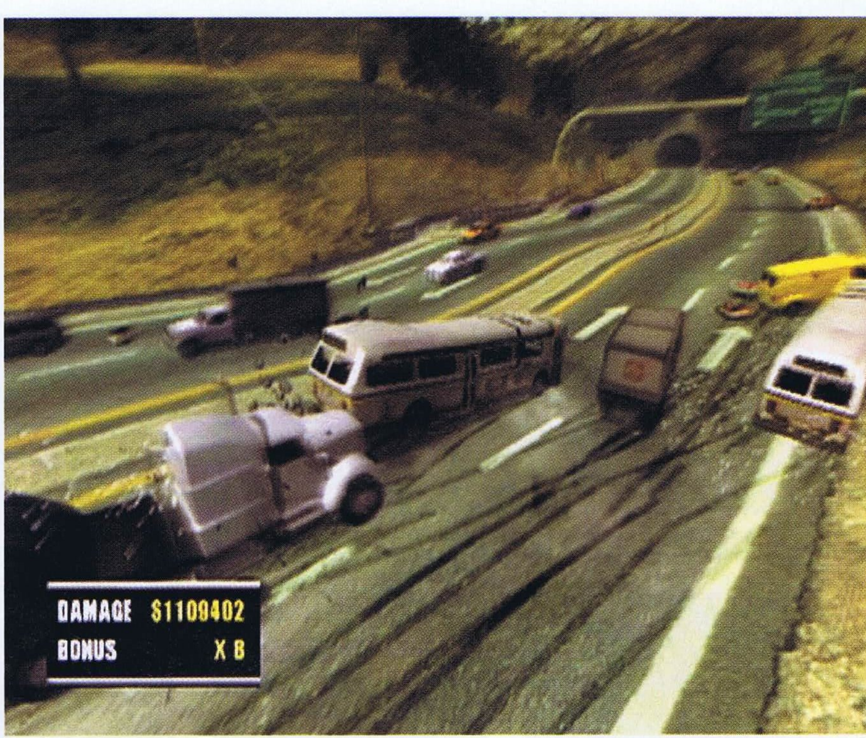
△ The Pursuit mode brought back lots of fond *Chase HQ* memories. Lovely stuff.



△ For a real sensation of gut-churning speed, choose the cockpit view.



△ Just clip the rear of this bus and you'll go flying. It won't be a pretty sight.



△ If you can cause a multi-lane pile-up, like this one, then you're truly a Crash mode master.

HORSES FOR COURSES

Six locations divided into 30 distinct tracks. Yowsah!



AIRPORT TERMINAL

Lovely sweeping curves mark out the Airport Terminal, which you'll also get to race on in rain-slicked wetness. Nice jets overhead, too.



INTERSTATE

Or, to use more familiar parlance, the motorway. Plenty of traffic to avoid and many bumps for catching that all-important 'air'. Man.



PALM BAY

A great downtown/marine area with some hugely exciting intersections and traffic-clogged roads. The best place for trying for Burnout chains.



SUNRISE VALLEY

This is Burnout, Vegas-style. Coupling glitzy cityscapes with parched desert tarmac, this is a combination of block-based right-angles and natural curves.



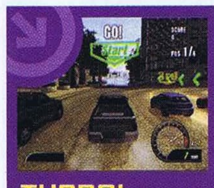
CRYSTAL SUMMIT

Not our favourite collection of courses, as they all include a run over narrow mountain roads. But never less than tense, it must be said.

excellent *Ridge Racer 64* made an appearance – arguably too late to save the console's unjustly maligned reputation. Gamecube has had no such problems, thanks in part to the appearance of the original *Burnout* last year, which was cause for rejoicing not only because it was an excellent racer, but because it looked better on Gamecube than on PS2, and the game seemed to be designed specifically for the Gamecube joypad. Not bad at all.

But *Burnout* really succeeded because it offered a number of tantalisingly well-constructed parts that meshed to form a compelling whole. The fact that it contained the most wincingly realistic crashes ever seen in a videogame sold the title, but there was a tremendous amount of subtlety amongst the flash and spectacle, too. Wonderfully responsive handling, hugely dangerous boost meter-filling mechanics, and a sense of speed second only to *F-Zero* all conspired to create a well-rounded package. Only the short lifespan really let the game down, the

> **"EVERY LAST ELEMENT HAS BEEN THOUGHT OF, EVEN DOWN TO INDICATING THE NEXT TURN AND THE GORGEOUS ROAD TEXTURES"**



TURBO!

***Burnout 2** has an obligatory turbo start. It's tricky to get right, though; use the C-stick for analogue acceleration and braking. Make sure the car's in first gear and the wheels are spinning and smoking, then, just as the announcer counts down to one, pull back and forward so that when you start your revs are between 6 and 7.*

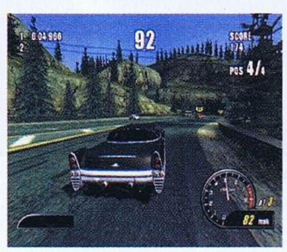


△ Yet another attempt to cross an intersection goes hideously wrong.

"It ratchets up the tension for a more focused, more energetic game"



△ Buses. Nobble 'em as much as possible for the biggest prizes. Thankfully they don't seem to be carrying any passengers. Phew.



△ Some of the secret cars aren't brilliant. Nice-looking, though.



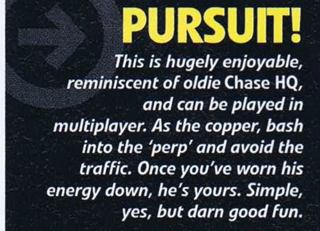
△ Paul prefers the third-person view. He's also rubbish at *B2*.



△ The two-player mode was a little wobbly in our review code, but it will be locked at 30 frames-per-second.

PURSUIT!

This is hugely enjoyable, reminiscent of oldie Chase HQ, and can be played in multiplayer. As the copper, bash into the 'perp' and avoid the traffic. Once you've worn his energy down, he's yours. Simple, yes, but darn good fun.

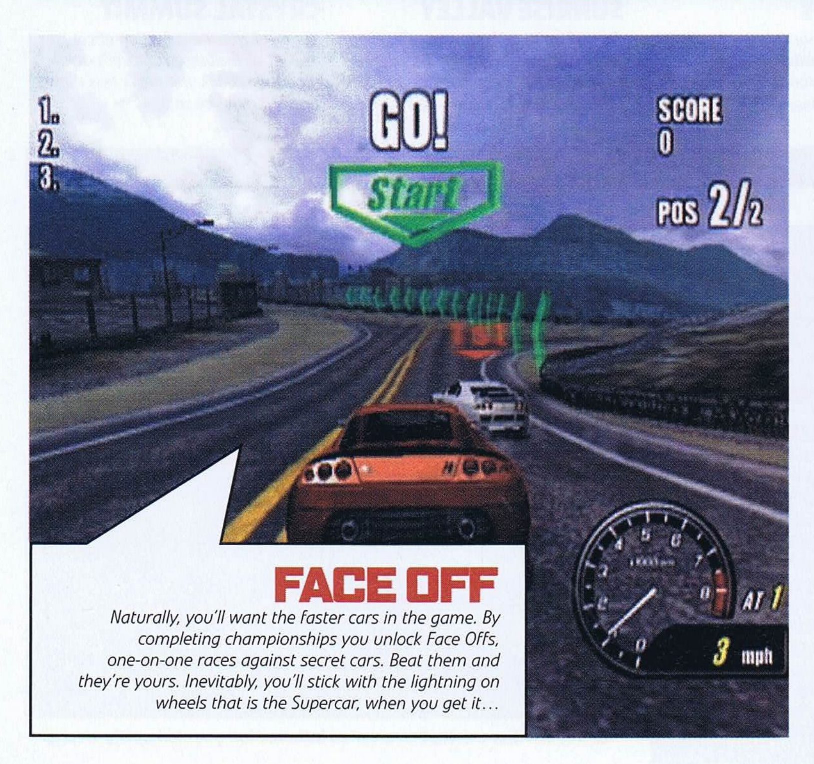








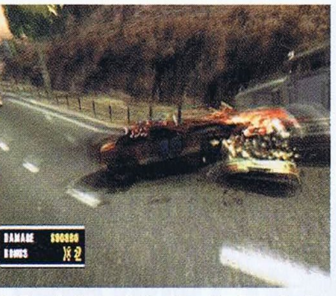




FACE OFF

Naturally, you'll want the faster cars in the game. By completing championships you unlock Face Offs, one-on-one races against secret cars. Beat them and they're yours. Inevitably, you'll stick with the lightning on wheels that is the Supercar, when you get it…

"CARS ARE NOW GIVEN TO MORE EXTREME POWERSLIDES YET ARE MORE CONTROLLABLE SWEEPING ROUND A CORNER"



△ Reminds us of the time Paul stacked his camper van. Long-haired fool.



single-player championship mode running out of steam a little too quickly.

Burnout 2 doesn't reinvent the wheel. What it does do, however, is ratchet up the speed and the tension – and just about everything else – to make a tighter, more focused and energetic game, throwing a couple of new extras in the mix to boot. It's faster, for a start, right from the most basic car, the Compact, and the later models are stunningly quick.

The handling has been tweaked ever so slightly; given that drifting is still a fundamental component of increasing your boost meter, the cars are seemingly given to more extreme powerslides, yet they feel more controllable when sweeping round a corner. You can also leave the ground now, when hitting a road bump at speed – another new addition to boosting, as gaining 'air' is one method by which you can increase your all-important boost level.

The process of boosting itself is now more obvious. Whereas before you were



SYMPHONY OF DESTRUCTION

Ever fancied driving into oncoming traffic just for the hell of it? *Burnout 2* encourages such reckless behaviour with the marvellous Crash mode.

DOWNHILL DEMOLITION



The first Crash level, and the simplest. Put the pedal to the metal and hurtle on down the hill. Try to get a turbo start, mind.



Hmm, what's this? A busy intersection! Full of traffic, ripe for mangling into several tons of shredded, buckled, smoking metal.

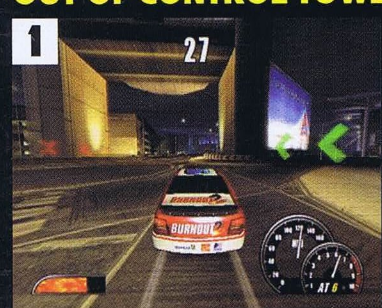


Bang! Smash right into a lorry. The pile-up is gratuitous, to say the least. Try to get the stationary traffic involved as well.



Once you've stacked everything, a helicopter-style fly-by will showcase the carnage and tot up the damage you've caused in dollars.

OUT OF CONTROL TOWER



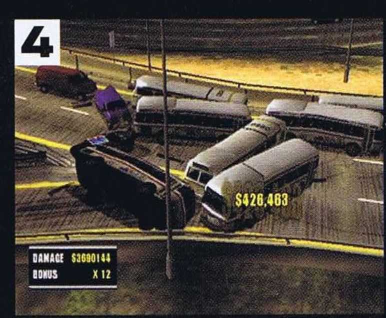
A really tricky one to win a gold medal on, this. It is utterly essential to get a turbo start if you want to achieve a decent score.



Boost ahead, and avoid the two cars perched on the brow of the hill. See those buses on the right? You need to get them involved.

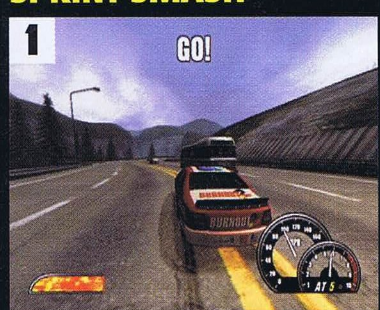


Try to hit the first yellow car on the right, and flip it up so that it snags the lorry ahead. Then wait for the buses. This will hurt…



Oof! You're going to need more than the Jaws of Life here. Crumped buses score mucho dinero, the clipped lorry should help too.

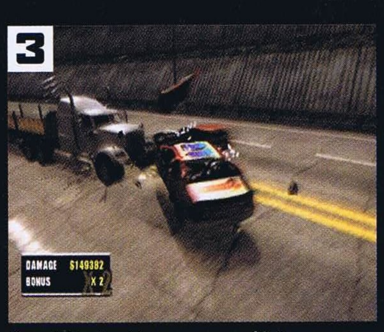
SPRINT SMASH



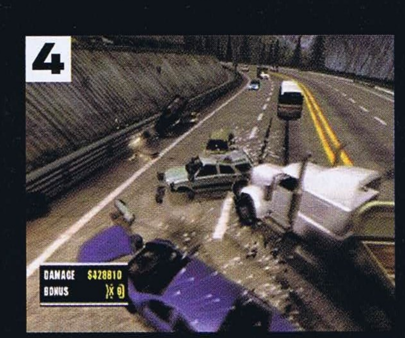
A Gamecube-specific level, this. Again, you need a turbo start – you have to overtake that traffic to the right of you.



Once you've passed said traffic you'll see some heading the other way. It all becomes clear now, yes? This will hurt. Again.



Smash the lead lorry, you need it to swerve over to catch the traffic you just overtook, while your carcass hits the oncoming cars.



All being well, you'll get every vehicle involved. And the more damage you cause to the big vehicles, the better. Painful, but fun.



"Every element has been honed and precision engineered"

FIELD OF PLAY

It's difficult enough to win without all that traffic around…

CROSS-TOWN TRAFFIC

Cleverly designed, the courses in Burnout 2. You're boosting down a long straight descent and then you have a veritable cavalcade of streaming traffic smack bang in your face. What are you going to do? Scream and push the accelerator down even further, if you're anything like us…

SUNDAY DRIVERS

Palm Bay has some excellent stretches of road, perfect for collecting Burnouts. Chain ten together and you zip through traffic like a wheeled ghost. Trouble is, though, there are loads of old grannies pootling along…



△ **The key to winning in this game is drifting. Get good at it and you'll boost all over the shop.**



△ **The Crash mode is so horribly addictive that you'll spend ages perfecting your technique. It's quite gruesome but great fun.**



△ **You can just tell he's going to fly over the side, can't you? Right down to the valley below. Dangerous driving, that.**

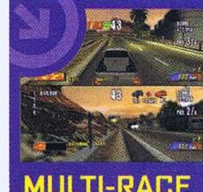


treated to a slight blurring of trackside detail, now there's a pronounced fisheye zoom and a clever sonic trick: sound effects drop away and background music gets louder, making for a particularly effective in-the-zone experience. It is a strange feature to mention, perhaps, but one which nonetheless demonstrates perfectly developer Criterion's attention to detail: every last tiny element has been thought of, even down to your car indicating which turn is coming up next or the gorgeous road textures. Nice.

And those crashes! If you thought they looked painful in *Burnout*, they're positively agonising in *B2*. There's so much more detail this time around, and the physics appear to have been reproduced even more accurately, as each splinter of glass, cloud of swirling dust, crumpling hood and bouncing tyre moves exactly as you'd expect, accompanied by the most horrific sound effects. That *Burnout 2* compels you to win by attempting ever more dangerous things makes the astonishing collisions a consequence that's both eminently repellent and grotesquely entertaining – a terrible risk you absolutely have to take if you want to succeed. Avoiding a fatal pile-up feels like a triumph gained by the skin of your teeth and hindbrain-based reaction.

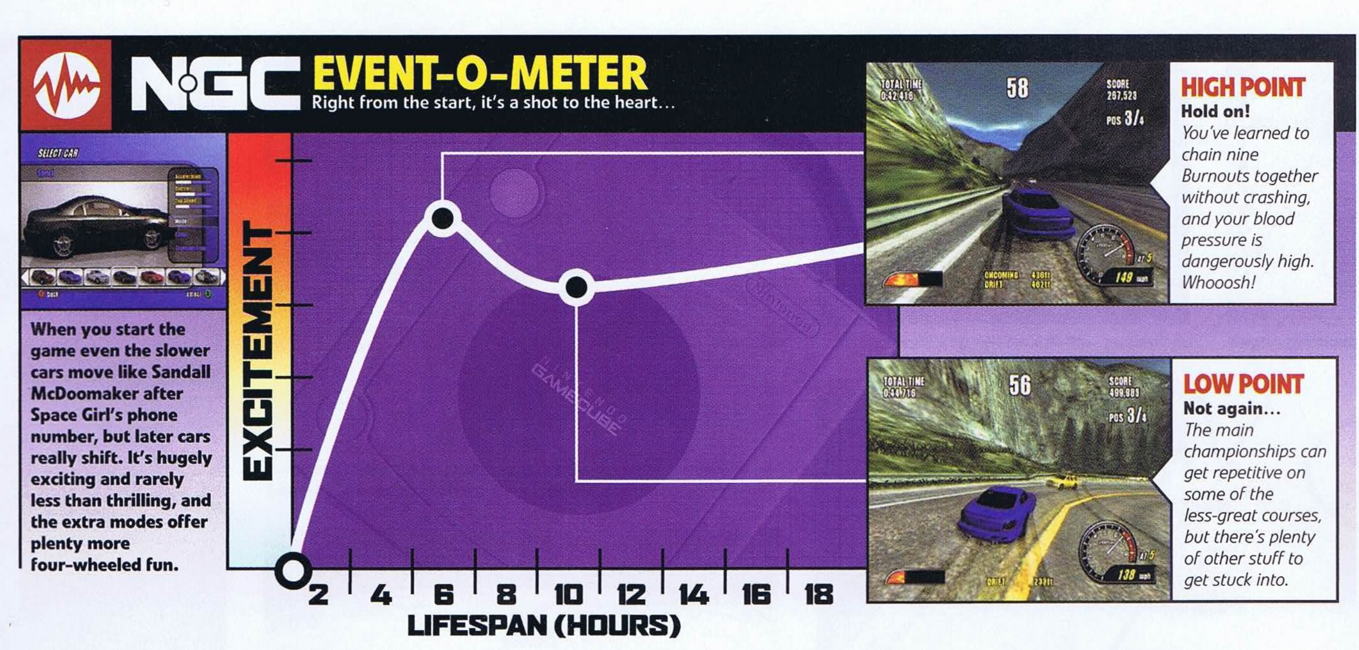
"EACH SPLINTER OF GLASS, CLOUD OF DUST, CRUMPLING HOOD AND BOUNCING TYRE MOVES JUST AS YOU'D EXPECT"

There's far more to the game than sheer spectacle, though. Every element has been been honed and precision engineered, directed towards serving a greater whole – making the player feel tension and, therefore, excitement. It's a testament to the designers' abilities that *Burnout 2* is a game you can become incredibly skilful at – as you'll find when you learn how to chain ten Burnouts together and zip between rush-hour traffic like a wheeled metal ghost – but initially the game grabs you through utter sensory overload and almost



MULTI-RACE

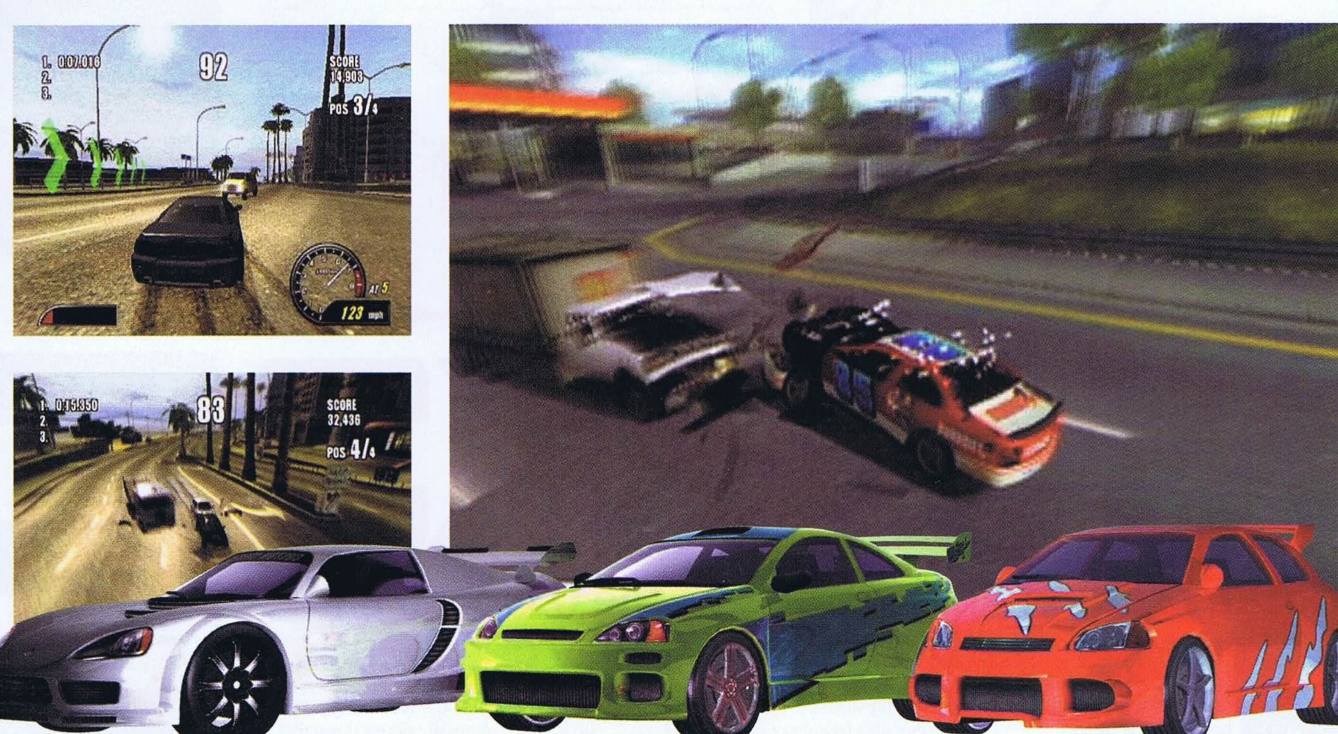
Sadly there's no four-player simultaneous play available, only head-to-heads for two, which are still hugely exciting. However ,the takey-turney multiplayer version of Crash is a hoot, as you try to cause more cash damage than your chums, and Pursuit, as we've mentioned elsewhere, is tippity-toppery fun fun fun.



When you start the game even the slower cars move like Sandall McDoomaker after Space Girl's phone number, but later cars really shift. It's hugely exciting and rarely less than thrilling, and the extra modes offer plenty more four-wheeled fun.

HIGH POINT
Hold on!
You've learned to chain nine Burnouts together without crashing, and your blood pressure is dangerously high. Whooosh!

LOW POINT
Not again…
The main championships can get repetitive on some of the less-great courses, but there's plenty of other stuff to get stuck into.



overwhelming sights and sounds. Most racing games stick you on a track with a few other competitors, *Burnout 2* plonks you straight onto a bustling motorway with a handling model designed to see you powerslide screechingly around corners and a remit to make you drive like an idiot. It's almost too much at first.

This is one game that really, honestly deserves to be played in the first person, as the out-of-car view just doesn't put you sufficiently in the thick of things. The decision to make the in-car view low to the road also increases your pulse rate: you're really *there*, aware of the danger involved in what you're doing but also of the adrenaline pay-off that comes from dodging articulated trucks and school buses at 150mph. It's tremendous.

But, like US presidents, Dan's sobriety and Martin's social skills, *Burnout 2* isn't perfect. The first game seems like a mere demo in comparison, such is the effect of the changes, improvements and additions made in the sequel. Nonetheless, there's the odd moment that rankles. Some of the courses are manifestly less than scintillating – as we've said, the mountainy bits of Crystal Summit Peak leave us cold – and although the main one-player game is peppered with single-lap challenges, Face Offs and Pursuits to keep you interested with changes of pace, some of the multiple-race championships can get repetitive. The synapse-frying sensory overload also means that the game becomes more suited to quick 15-minute bursts of play as you progress, simply because immersing yourself in it for any length of time can be positively exhausting.

Finally, racing fans who prefer the beard-stroking, port-shearing and gear-ratio twiddling of serious sims such as *Gran Turismo* might well be left cold by the accessibility and apparent superficiality of *Burnout 2*. To those people, though, we say this: poppycock. There may be no long nights of the engine-tinkering soul here, but the immediacy and sheer excitement that *Burnout 2* offers is complemented by a subtlety of design and car-handling that adds long-term substance to the pick-up-and-play flash. And let's face it, the Crash mode is simply stupendous fun.

Three members of the **NGC** team have already completed *Burnout 2* on the PS2. That they're champing at the bit to do it all over again on the Gamecube is surely testament to the game's excellence. Long may it reign.

JES BICKHAM

IMPROVED!

Criterion took the time to polish B2, making it significantly better than on its original PS2 release. Polygon count and texture size have increased, and it all looks far superior and crisper on Gamecube, with all manner of special effects and technical guffery helping matters. There's also a whopping 15 new Crash levels to take the total to 30! Blimey.



- Looks fabulous.
- Astonishingly quick.
- Brilliant handling.
- Those crashes!



- Fairly shallow single player.
- If you don't like racing games…



IF YOU LIKE THIS…

Wave Race
Nintendo
NGC/67 91%
Blinding racing-with-a-twist, on the best virtual water you'll ever see.



9 VISUALS
Lovingly rendered cars and wonderful environments.

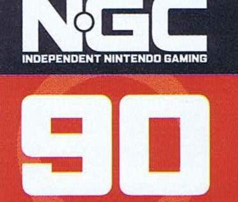
7 SOUNDS
Great effects with an emphasis on loud guitars.

8 MASTERY
Silky-smooth, yet throws loads of stuff around.

8 LIFESPAN
A variety of modes and entertaining multiplayer games.

VERDICT

A veritable rush of adrenaline, *Burnout 2* is hugely thrilling and a brilliantly focused arcade racer. Never less than giant fun.

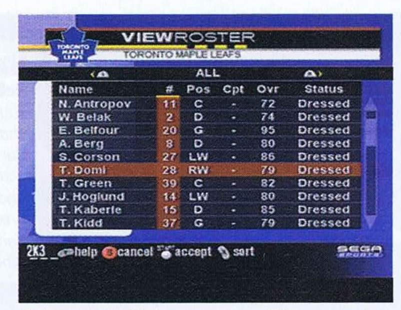


90

"You'd expect a few prodding of sticks"



△ The side view messes your shooting angles.



△ Rosters – all the rosters you'll ever need.



△ Edmonton steal a lead through unbelievably pink front man Dwayne A Felcherbox. (Note: we may have changed his name.)



△ There are collisions and a bit of rough and tumble, but no stand-up fist fights. Disappointing.




△ Graphically it's efficient, but there's nothing *that* special.



- Incredible levels of detail pre-match.
- Slick animation.
- Great commentary.

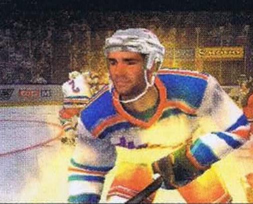


- Lack of speed.
- Little scrapping.
- Presentation not as tidy as other *2K3*s.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...

NHL 2003
EA Sports
NGC/75 64%
The engine's not as good as this, but the action's thicker and faster. And rougher.



7 VISUALS
Great animation, not quite so great all-round presentation.

8 SOUNDS
Great commentary throughout, and random organ noises.

8 MASTERY
Robust engine, smooth frame-rate – pretty impressive.

7 LIFESPAN
Tons of stats, but the games aren't as good as they should be.

VERDICT
With an injection of pace and some face-remoulding scraps, this could be brilliant. As it is, it's complex and huge, but not really enough fun.



72

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	INFOGRAMES
DEVELOPER	SEGA
RELEASE DATE	NOW
PLAYERS	1-4
MEMORY CARD PAGES	17
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40



NHL 2K3

Hockey cokey! After success on the US footie and basketball, er, 'fields', Sega go the way of the puck.

It's hard not to like ice hockey. It's lightning-quick, it's got goals, one of the league's best players is called Satan and crazy organ music plays every time the action gets boring. To top it all, when things start to drag players can lump each other in the blabberbox and, instead of being penalised, everyone – referees included – stand around and cheer.

Which is why console hockey is so often so good. And, let's face it, after the excellent *NFL* and *NBA 2K3*s, Sega, and coders Visual Concepts, couldn't fail to produce a game so chock-full of the good stuff – speed, goals and body-eviscerating violence – that it'll simply be impossible to put down. Er, right?

Well, no. See, the chief problem with *NHL 2K3* is that it's missing two key ingredients: the game is much slower than it should be, and there's virtually no fighting. We suppose, if you really, *really* had to forego one of them, it'd be the violence – after all, we still recall how the stand-up fist-fights of *Wayne Gretzky 3D Hockey* eventually got on our nerves, but you'd at least expect a bit of niggle, a few prodding of sticks in places where sticks aren't allowed to go.

> "THE CHIEF PROBLEM WITH THE GAME IS THAT IT'S MISSING TWO KEY INGREDIENTS: SPEED, AND BODY-EVISCERATING VIOLENCE"

But it's the speed that's the real killer in *NHL 2K3*. Don't get us wrong: this game moves from end to end smoothly and efficiently, and – when things hot up – at an eventually decent pace. But there's no sense of urgency, no sense that anything you're doing really matters that much. It's more gliding around the ice rink at Bracknell Leisure Centre on a Sunday afternoon, than full-on, points-mean-prizes league hockey.

Which is a shame, because like its NHL and NBA predecessors, in terms of size and complexity, *NHL 2K3* sticks it to EA's alternative with the business end. The game's Franchise mode is, perhaps, its most impressive aspect. It opens up a whole world of management and stats, where you can shape and mould future players, and even teach your existing superstars new ways to make better use of their time on the rink. But, there's plenty else too, including rosters, creation modes and market dabbling.

Nevertheless, the match is *the* most important part of any hockey sim – and it's here that *NHL* ultimately disappoints.

TIM WEAVER

"*Ikaruga* is classically elegant in its design"



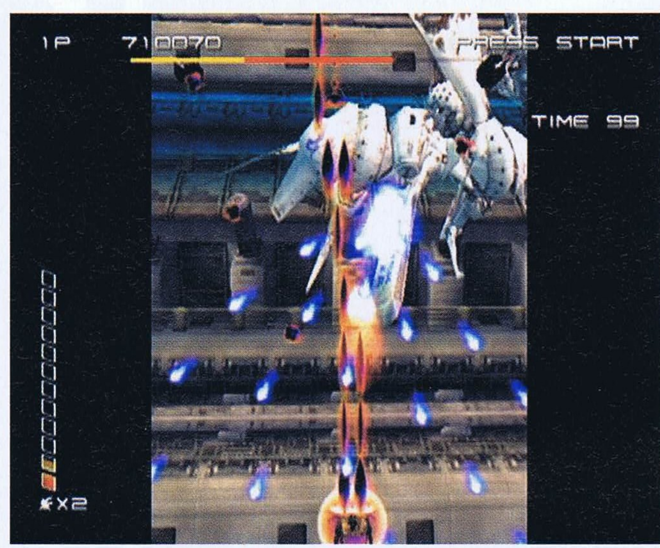
△ Bullet patterns get increasingly more ludicrous as you press on...



△ ...like here, where you have to constantly switch colours to survive.



△ Use these powerful beam attacks to your advantage. They charge up your power meter very quickly indeed, allowing you to take out multiple enemies.



△ It's possible to defeat this boss by changing colour according to its attacks – it's hard work, but you cause twice the damage and so beat him faster.



△ An encounter with the third-level boss will make you a nervous wreck.




△ It's a punishing run through the ultra-hard third level.

+

- Hard. VERY hard.
- Great level design.
- Success makes you ultra-hardcore.

–

- Hard. VERY hard.
- Only five levels.
- Not instantly accessible.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Gradius Advance
Konami
NGC/63 90%
The only other shooter on a Nintendo platform worth mentioning.

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	INFOGRAMES
DEVELOPER	TREASURE
RELEASE DATE	9TH MAY
PLAYERS	1-2
MEMORY CARD PAGES	4
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40



IKARUGA

Ignored or over-hyped? Not everything's that black and white.

Ikaruga's not going to appeal to everyone – we can tell you that much right now. In fact, don't be surprised if you see it loitering at the bottom of bargain bins around the country a matter of weeks after its release. This has absolutely no bearing on the quality of the game, mind you – it's more to do with the quality of the person playing it.

This game will almost certainly wipe the floor with you. Even on Easy, it will take some time to finish the game's five levels. In fact, we'd wager that many won't even get (or have the patience to get) that far, and that's the crux of the matter. Either you'll hit the "it's too &@$%ing hard!" barrier and wonder what all the fuss is about, or you'll gain strength from it. Relentlessly pursuing what initially feels impossible – empowered by the knowledge that you're becoming increasingly 'hardcore' – is where *Ikaruga* draws its strength.

For those who take this path and open themselves to appreciate it, the game will become a stubborn obsession for many months to come.

CLASSY EYES

Ikaruga is classically elegant in its design. Treasure know how to make a shooter, and it really shows. The intriguing dynamic of having to switch between two colours to absorb corresponding coloured bullets, while attempting to colour-match the enemies you're dispatching to increase your score, forces you into a difficult dillemma. The decision of whether to ramp up the numbers or keep your head down and just stay alive is a hard one to call. It's a delicate balance. If you fail, it's not the game's fault – it's because you're just not good enough.

Progression does reap rewards, though – even if it's just for another glimpse of Treasure's cruel imagination. The levels have been painstakingly constructed to milk every last drop of your skills. Every colour-switching scenario is explored, and every new (frankly stunning) boss will bring both confusion on meeting and then sheer elation once beaten. The better you get, the more you can take vital seconds to appreciate the sublime aesthetics – especially where the amazing 3D backgrounds are concerned.



△ Unfortunately, the PAL version is noticeably jerkier than the NTSC game.

If you're partial to a slice of 2D blasting, this is undoubtedly one of the finest examples of the genre you're ever likely to find.

GERAINT EVANS

7 VISUALS
Unique and elegant design, exhilarating spectacles. Lovely.

8 SOUNDS
Mental robotic FX and appropriately rousing music.

6 MASTERY
2D with borders – and the PAL conversion is slower.

7 LIFESPAN
Five levels which will last out as long as your patience.

VERDICT
Like the Japanese puffer fish, it's not to everyone's tastes. The curious will try it – resulting in inevitable casualties...






The levels are plain, but sharp enough.


The bike. Here's one: don't bother.


Yowser! It's jeep-versus-jeep in an all-out battle to the death!


The start of the races is where it's most interesting – then opponents just disappear.


The crowd look *reeeal* excited.


The suspension is forgiving.


The truck. What a load of old crap.


Your co-driver gives you directions.


We like the way the riders sit bolt upright, even when it's bumpy.

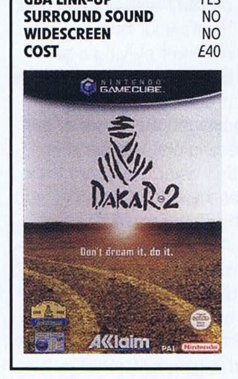
DAKAR 2

Au revoir! Acclaim give you a reason to get out of France...


What kind of sport has traffic jams?

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	ACCLAIM
DEVELOPER	ACCLAIM
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
PLAYERS	1-2
MEMORY CARD PAGES	10
GBA LINK-UP	YES
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40



We'll admit: we weren't expecting much from this. A game based on a race most of us keep forgetting even exists. And not only that. A game based on a race where you spend most of your life alone, with only dust and tyre tread for company.

Yawn.

Except *Dakar 2* is really good. We know – *we can't believe it either*. Sure, it's got the technical nous of *XG* coders Acclaim Cheltenham behind it, but it's still a potentially, and by rights, tedious point-to-point racing game where you don't see other drivers unless you're passing them and the only challenge is preventing your vehicle from rolling.

But somehow it works. Principally, it's probably to do with the handling of the vehicles – or, rather, the handling of the cars. In a nice twist, you can choose between cars, trucks and bikes, but the bikes are weedy and unexciting, and the trucks are just rubbish, so it really just comes down to the car-cum-jeeps.

The handling is reminiscent of the old *Top Gear* series, with gentle caresses of the analogue stick enough to adjust line as well as perform more showbiz manoeuvres like swinging through a U-turn. The controls surprise you at first – for such a dirt-splattered, dust-covered piece of racing rough, they're sensitive.

The courses are also surprisingly well constructed, offering the chance to combine dangerous high-speed jinks with inch-perfect cornering. Applying the brakes provides a satisfying way to turn 180s and, as the race works its way from the streets of Paris to the deserts of North Africa, the change in surface can really, genuinely, be felt in the movement of your vehicle, as well as the general wear and tear on your car.

If there's one problem with *Dakar 2* it's the fact that it's effectively one big time trial – no opponents, no tension, no *real* satisfaction in winning. If that doesn't bother you, you should try it.

TIM WEAVER



- Spot-on handling.
- Good courses.
- Choice of vehicles.
- Vehicle repair.



- One big time trial.
- No CPU opponents worth the name.
- Lacks excitement.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Burnout 2
Acclaim
NGC/80 90%
Super-fast arcade sequel that demands to be played – reviewed this very issue!



7 VISUALS
Occasional frame-rate glitch, but a sturdy effort.

6 SOUNDS
Not much in the way of sounds, unless you like engine noises.

7 MASTERY
Doesn't push the machine technically, but handles well.

8 LIFESPAN
There's incentive to come back, plus a solid two-player mode.



VERDICT

It's one big time trial – which you can get in any normal racing game – and there are no real opponents, but *Dakar 2* is enjoyable, robust racing fun.



79

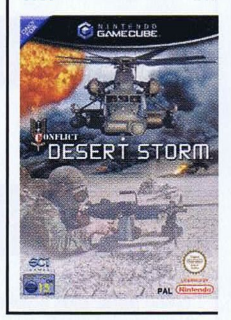
△ "Goats ahead, sir!" "Shoot them soldier, they could be packed with bombs".

△ Finding safe havens to rest and regroup is essential after a heavy bit of fire-fighting.

△ Shades of News At Ten: one of our boys watches as a Tomahawk Cruise Missile sails overhead towards a target in the centre of Baghdad. This game takes realism to new levels...



DEVELOPER	PIVOTAL GAMES
PUBLISHER	SCI
RELEASE DATE	18TH APRIL
PLAYERS	1-4
MEMORY CARD PAGES	8
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	YES
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40



CONFLICT DESERT STORM

A second chance to wage war in the deserts of Iraq where your greatest enemy is the sand. Crack-chafe alert!



DUCK AND RUN

Your men have three stances: upright, crouching and prone. Not only does being closer to the ground present the enemy with a smaller target, it also makes you harder to detect in the first place and increases the accuracy of any weapon you choose to deploy. As soon as enemy troops appear, train yourself to hit the dirt – it's a lifesaver.

KNOW YOUR FRIENDS

Each of your troops is useful in a variety of combat situations. Not only can your medic, for example, heal critically wounded comrades, he is also a dab hand at planting C4 plastic explosive charges. It pays, therefore, to scrutinise the repertoire of each, find out where their specialist skills lie and experiment with how to use their combined talents to best effect.





You can't help but feel odd. Here's your humble reviewer playing a game based on the first Gulf War precisely 24 hours after Tony Blair mortgaged the future of our nation on a second one – a war that most of us didn't want. The scary thing is thinking that the kind of activities you get up to in this game could be going on *right now*. It's quite unsettling, watching cruise missiles fall on Baghdad in the game, then turning on the news and seeing it happen for real. But let's put world affairs aside and try to ignore the fact that this game, inspired by a conflict 12 years past, has suddenly become painfully relevant.

In true Andy McNab style, *Conflict Desert Storm* wraps you in desert DPMs (disruptive pattern material, or camouflage to you and us) and sends

BROTHERS IN ARMS
Success relies on teamwork. While you can give general fire and movement orders, if you want a job done properly, it's more fun to do it yourself…

ORIENT EAR-RING
You can pull up a map of the area in the pause menu, but this can really divorce you from the action, so the lovely developers have added a waypoint marker to the compass, telling you where your next objective lies.

GUN CUPBOARD
Your troops can lug a surprising amount of kit around, and can swap with each other – useful when someone's low on medi-packs. Some have speciality gear, such as Bradley; in certain missions, he gets to radio in fire support.

THE MAIN MAN
This is the chap you currently have control over, and therefore the one who issues the orders to your other squaddies. You can also switch to first-person mode for snipey bits.

SCUD SQUAD
One of your chief tasks is hunting down Scud missile launchers before they can rain death and destruction on Israel. You need to keep your eyes peeled for enemy weapons caches, as your own supplies of explosives and rockets are limited. Fortunately, RPG launchers are the favoured anti-armour weapons of the Iraqi army, so infiltrate enemy camps and get filching…



you into the Iraqi hinterland to surreptitiously achieve what can't be accomplished with conventional forces. With this in mind, you'll be destroying key installations, scouring the country for Scud missiles before they can be launched, disrupting military communications, ambushing convoys, rescuing coalition hostages and so on.

You're not a one-man army, though. The focus is on squad command and to this end you're given four specialists: a heavy weapons soldier, a medic and demolitions man, a sniper and an all-round assault expert. Achieving your objectives in any given mission requires you to know what each of them can do and, most importantly, how to get the most out of the controls, of which there are stacks. But there's nothing particularly complex about them – simply whizz through the training missions and you'll be a dab hand.

Squad tactics is where the game's main strength lies. You can switch between your four troops at any time using the D-pad; the three you're not using are

> **"IN UNEXPLORED TERRITORY IT'S ALL TOO EASY TO ROUND A BEND TO FIND THE ENEMY LEVELLING THEIR AK47S AT YOUR TROOPS"**



△ Tracer fire fills the sky as the Ack-Ack guns attempt to bring down allied aircraft. Very atmospheric. And more than a little worrying.



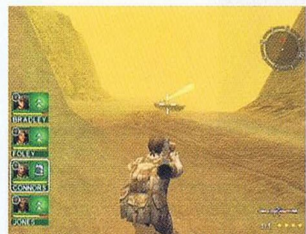


DID YOU KNOW? The SAS was formed by a chap called David Stirling in 1941 to disrupt German communications and destroy vital supply depots in North Africa.



STAYING OBJECTIVE

Life in the special forces is not easy. Your targets are many and varied.



ALL TANKED UP

Iraqi tanks are massing in the desert sands ready to counterattack. Your mission is to take them down one by one, in any way you can.



PLAY IT AGAIN, SAM

The threat of SAM missiles prevents US bombers from striking their targets. A small grenade goes a long way to resolving that particular problem.



AIR OF URGENCY

If you want to call in A-10 airstrikes against enemy armour you'll need to knock out their Shilka anti-aircraft support vehicles.



JAILHOUSE ROCKS

In the final days of the campaign you will be required to infiltrate a Baghdad prison complex in an attempt to liberate allied POWs.



GENTLY DOES IT

Defusing weapons of mass destruction is a delicate process. It's a good idea, then, to protect this scientist while he does the fiddly stuff. Just don't sneeze.

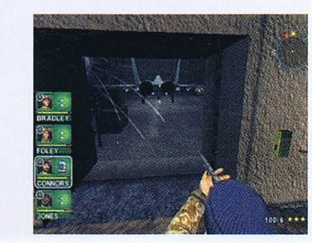
"YOU CAN APPROACH MISSIONS YOUR WAY. YOU HAVE OPTIONS, IT'S UP TO YOU TO FIND 'EM"





△ **Troop carriers are deadly. Hit them before they hit you.**





controlled by a pretty decent bit of AI. But their actions are dictated mostly by the orders you issue. They can be told to go to a specific point in your field of vision, fire at will, stand down, hit the dirt or follow the man you're controlling. These are all attention, drawing them into a lethal crossfire. On another occasion you may want to lie three down on their bellies with orders to fire at will to cover the advance of a single man across open terrain. And the ability to personally position each man by actually

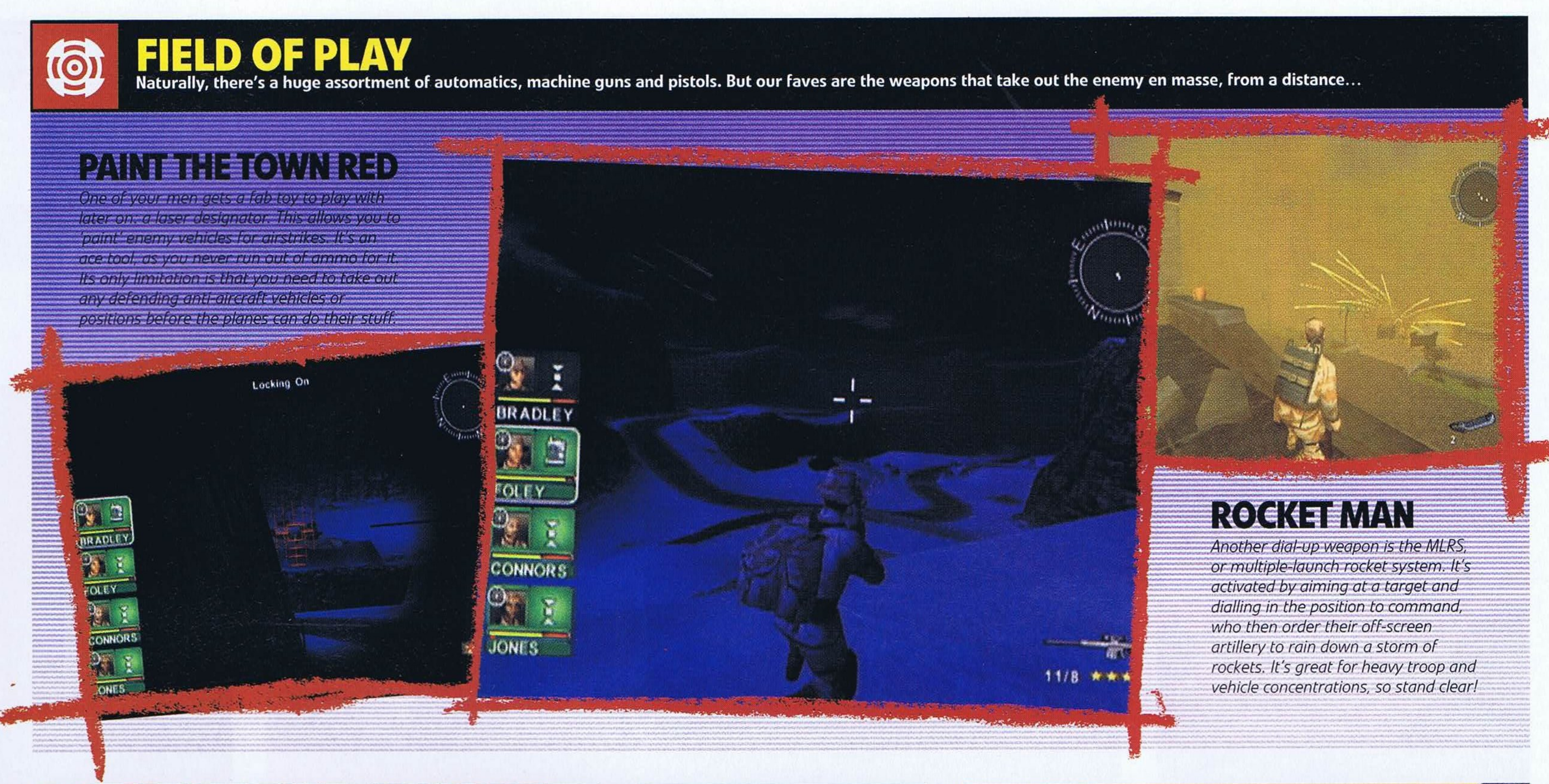
"THE NEED TO MAKE TACTICAL DECISIONS AT LIGHTNING SPEED IS A STROKE OF GENIUS"

the commands you need to tackle a near-infinite variety of combat situations. For example, if you spot a convenient bottleneck in the terrain you could order men into position on high ground on each side, instruct a third to lie down in the road and tell the fourth to run ahead and get the enemy's controlling him really gives you a tactical edge. It's a cracking system that gives you a sense of complete freedom.

Of course, in reality that freedom often has its limits. When you're operating in unexplored territory it's all too easy to round a corner and find enemies levelling their AKs at your

FIELD OF PLAY

Naturally, there's a huge assortment of automatics, machine guns and pistols. But our faves are the weapons that take out the enemy en masse, from a distance…



PAINT THE TOWN RED

One of your men gets a fab toy to play with later on: a laser designator. This allows you to 'paint' enemy vehicles for airstrikes. It's an ace tool, as you never run out of ammo for it. Its only limitation is that you need to take out any defending anti-aircraft vehicles or positions before the planes can do their stuff.

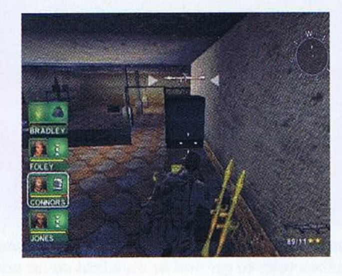
ROCKET MAN

Another dial-up weapon is the MLRS, or multiple-launch rocket system. It's activated by aiming at a target and dialling in the position to command, who then order their off-screen artillery to rain down a storm of rockets. It's great for heavy troop and vehicle concentrations, so stand clear!



△ Taking over Iraqi defence posts and using them against their old occupants is a key tactic. And yes, you *can* fire those heavy machine guns!







△ Our man provides covering fire from a fixed gun-emplacement. leave him to have fun, and order the rest of your squad into position.

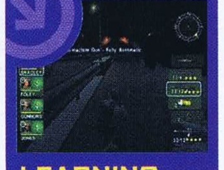
squad. You need to have your eyes and ears open all the time, constantly checking over your shoulder for that patrol you might have missed. The fact that you must make tactical decisions at lightning speed is a stroke of genius: it creates constant tension and the sense that you're up against the clock.

When combat does happen, it comes in all forms. The way to succeed is to try to wage war on *your* terms by setting up ambushes or sneaking round the enemy to take them unawares.

As well as your standard rifle-equipped soldier, you'll face all manner of tanks, troop transports, fixed gun emplacements, choppers and the like. Of course, these require a heavier hand and that's where ordnance comes into play. Your heavy weapons specialist takes shoulder-mounted anti-armour fun into most missions, while your demolitions boy tends to C4 charges and anti-tank mines.

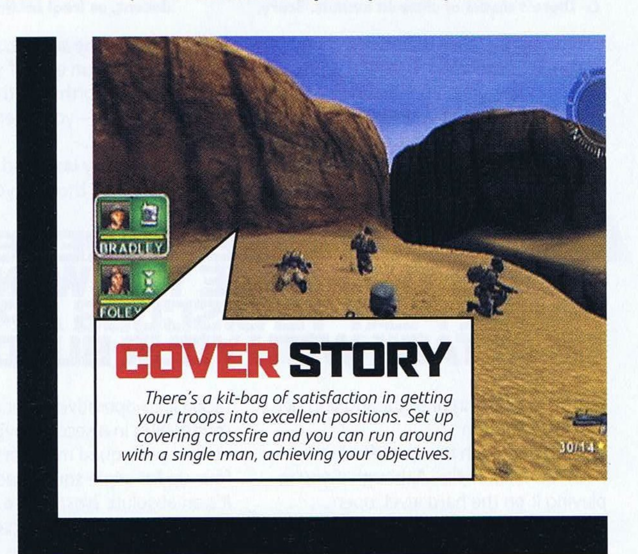
Tougher tanks require a planned approach, however. A rocket on the nose won't quite cut through their armour, so it's a case of firing one at the rear, where the armour's thinner, or sneaking up while its turret's facing the other way and planting some C4 up its jacksie. Diversionary tactics can help here: you can always order one of your men to make a glory run into the open to draw its fire, while another delivers the sucker-punch. That's the beauty of this game: you can approach the missions the way *you* want to. It's not a prescribed affair – you have options and it's up to you to find 'em.

Take stealth. Games that force you to work furtively can get a little tedious: all that precious pussy-footing around, and you never



LEARNING CURVE

As you work through the missions your troops get better at what they do, RPG-style. Their weapons skills improve as they rack up the kills, as does their ability to react to situations quickly and effectively – crucial when you're called on to make instant decisions under pressure. By the end of the game they're rock-solid. Like Gibraltar.

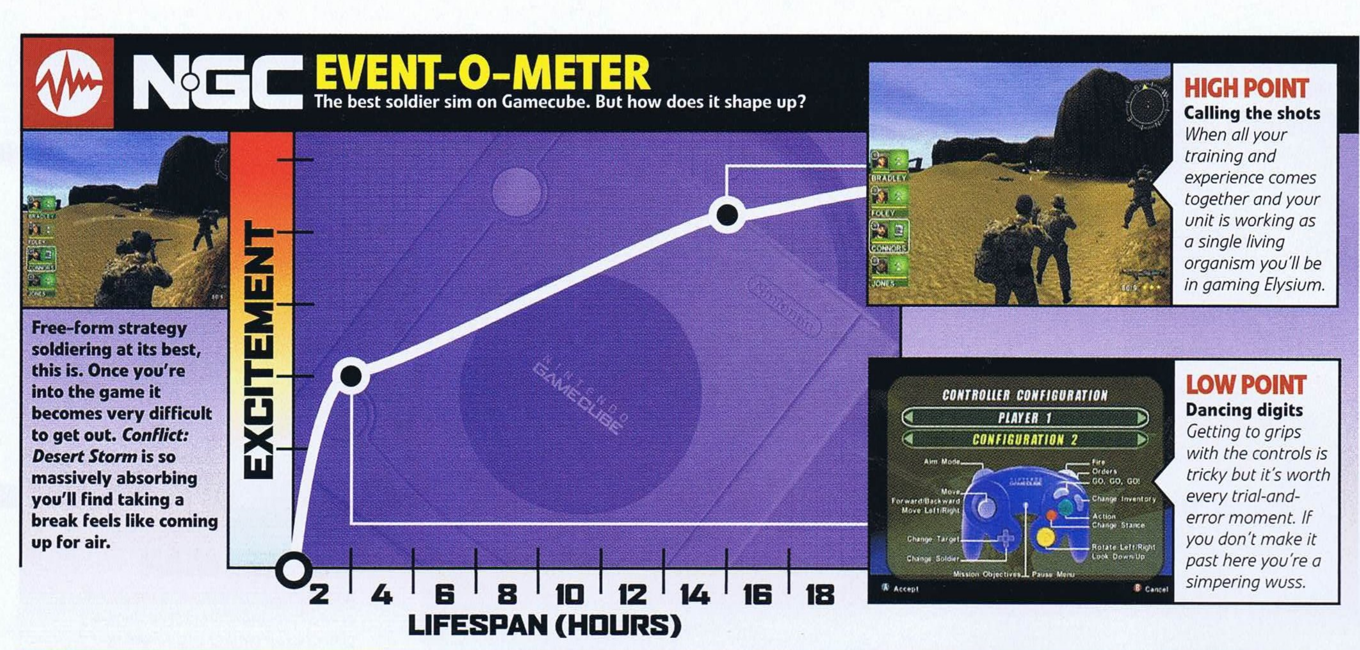


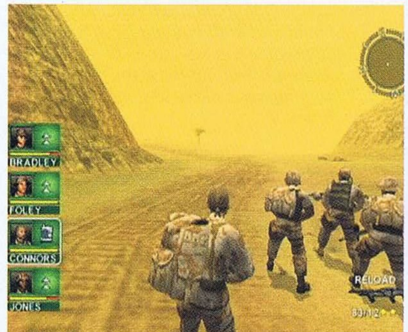
COVER STORY

There's a kit-bag of satisfaction in getting your troops into excellent positions. Set up covering crossfire and you can run around with a single man, achieving your objectives.

DID YOU KNOW? Blair 'Paddy' Mayne, an early SAS operative, single-handedly destroyed more aircraft in World War II than any allied pilot!

"Hard to fault – this is a cracking game, wicked fun and intensely engaging"





Δ Vision-obscuring sand can be your friend.



Δ There's stacks of close-in assault. Scary.



Δ Laying down suppressing fire is essential when you want to move your unit ahead. The enemy AI is pretty decent, as Iraqi soldiers often take to ground or dive into cover when fired upon. Nice touches – and useful.

get the choice to do things differently. In *Conflict Desert Storm* stealth is just another weapon in your arsenal. If you want to avoid overt confrontation you can sneak slowly around, using silenced pistols and knives. However, there are times when all you want is a frantic, ring-ding poo-grin firefight and you get that choice, often.

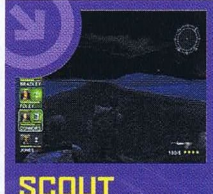
Each approach has its difficulties, each has its benefits. Although if you're playing it on the hard level, open exchanges of fire can be lethal, so stealth is often a useful tool. Oh, and while we're on the subject, don't just crack through it on easy. If you want your money's worth play the game on medium at least – you'll get a hell of a lot more out of it.

To wring every last bead of pleasure out of the game, though, you'll want to tackle it co-operatively. Get one mate round, plug in a second joypad and control two squad members each, or go four-up for some squinty adventuring. It's an absolute *blast*. There are precious few games in this world that make you want to pause proceedings and discuss a plan of attack with your buddy. OK, you don't get the whole screen to yourself but that's no hardship and it's a trifling price to pay for the enhanced fun factor. There's massive satisfaction to be gained from assigning yourselves roles: you're the heavy weapons man, while your mates take on sniping and infantry duties, for example.

A hard game to fault, this is intensely engaging and wicked fun for one to four players, and heartily improved over the PS2 and Xbox versions. The only downside is that you may not like soldier sims. But if you do relish a deeply absorbing challenge that's freeform enough to let you call the shots, and as tight as a drum in every department, then buy *Conflict Desert Storm*. You will not be disappointed. Cold, hard fact, that.

AL BICKHAM

"IT'S A BLAST – THERE ARE FEW GAMES THAT MAKE YOU WANT TO PAUSE PLAY TO DISCUSS A PLAN OF ATTACK WITH YOUR BUDDY"



SCOUT MOVEMENT

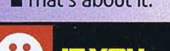
While many missions take place in bright sunlight, some are conducted at night or in fearsome, biblical sandstorms. These are the trickiest, as it's all too easy to stumble right into the middle of a hornets' nest of enemy troops and vehicles without realising it. Sending someone to scout ahead is essential.



- Hugely strategic.
- Nail-biting combat.
- A supreme level of squad control.



- A few samey missions.
- Over too soon.
- That's about it.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Ghost Recon
Ubi Soft
NGC/79 66%
Clancy's passable-but-clunky (and also quite fuzzy) special-ops sim.



7 VISUALS
Great – but still a little basic compared to, say, *Metroid*.

8 SOUNDS
Superb rifle clatter and bullet strikes add to the realism.

8 MASTERY
A wonderful optimisation of a multi-format game.

7 LIFESPAN
Hmm, wish there were a few more missions…

VERDICT

No lazy conversion, this. A ferret-sleek Cube-optimised masterpiece, and a cracking soldier sim to boot. Highly recommended.





Nintendo®
GAMING 24:7.

THE LEGEND OF
ZELDA™
A LINK TO THE PAST™

Includes new multiplayer adventure
Four Swords

Find the Princess, before darkness finds you.

"...arguably the most loved game ever made. Essential. For everyone." **CVG.com**

"One of the GBA's absolute musts, especially with the addition of Four Swords." **Gamesmaster** 95%.

"One of the best SNES games ever, and a startling new multiplayer game. This is an essential GBA purchase." **NGC** 92%.

OUT NOW

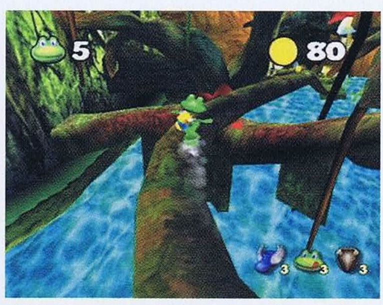




"It's enjoyable, albeit in a thoroughly uninspired kind of way"



△ You've got to avoid his spidery legs, which is why he pumps out eggy green gas to try and confuse you. Crazy arachnid.



△ It's like *Tarzan*. Only you're a freakin' frog.



△ This is the hub – access levels at your peril.



△ Bet you can't guess what you've got to do here. Toughie.



△ Frogger boxes clever… oh, alright, he doesn't. He just does exactly the same as before.



■ Solid, if uninspired, platforming action.
■ Looks okay.
■ Music's quite nice.



■ Truly, excruciatingly bad control system.
■ No surprises. At all.
■ Seen it all before.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Pac-Man World 2
Namco
NGC/78 70%
Another one of yesterday's heroes gets a makeover, but this is much better.



6 VISUALS
No use of anything Gamecube has on offer, but okay-ish.

6 SOUNDS
Stupidly voiced cut-scenes, but the music's not too bad.

4 MASTERY
A couple of neatish effects here and there, but otherwise…

5 LIFESPAN
It's not particularly hard, but the controls make it a challenge.

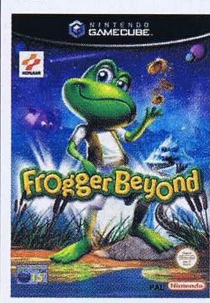
VERDICT
Perfectly acceptable platform game with no new ideas that is marred by clunky, thoughtless controls. It's not bad, but you wouldn't pay for it.





INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	KONAMI
DEVELOPER	KONAMI HAWAII
RELEASE DATE	NOW
PLAYERS	1
MEMORY CARD PAGES	12
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40



FROGGER BEYOND

Hop floats! It's the comeback you never thought you'd see (and, let's face it, probably didn't want)…

Watch out *Mario Sunshine*! Frogger, years-old star of road-crossing squish-'em-up, er, *Frogger*, is back – in full 3D! Well, a kind of 3D. The sort of 3D where the game decides where you're going to go, and cleverly timed camera swooshes fool you into thinking you're seeing it panoramically.

Still, in a game almost entirely devoid of any imagination – good or otherwise – you'll take a clever use of the camera.

Predictably, 21st Century *Frogger* means cut-scenes and training modes, both of which last much longer than you really need them to – especially the training mode. Any game that needs to tell you what a checkpoint looks like when it's got a black and white flag flying above it, or – even better – what coins do, should be viewed with a fair degree of suspicion. After you instantly forget everything you've been told, it's on with the main game – a moderately engaging, ideas-free vacuum, where the analogue stick isn't used at all, and every push of the D-pad sends Frogger one leap forward in that direction. This is fine, in principle, especially when you are then given an extra-high jump via A.

Problem is, when you get to the edge of a chasm, your natural reaction is to press the d-pad in order to line yourself up for the jump ahead. Wrong! Lining up is done with L and R – line yourself up using the D-pad and you'll plummet to your death. Sadly, even though your brain is telling you to line yourself up using the shoulders, it's hard to forget years of practice in other platform titles and suddenly *go against all the rules of gaming* by using L and R for direction.

"SHAME ABOUT THE CONTROLS… BECAUSE IT'S QUITE ENJOYABLE IN AN UNINSPIRED KIND OF WAY"



△ Frogger: will he ever cross that road?

The experience is soiled somewhat by this, because although *Frogger* is the sort of adventure you instantly remove from your brain the second you stop playing, it's still quite enjoyable, albeit in an old-school, thoroughly uninspired kind of way. The levels are as generic as you can possibly get, the sort of thing you'll have been playing in *Manic Miner* in 1983, but they do toss up a few challenges and there are a couple of surprises too, which you'll have seen already if you've played *Tarzan*. But still.

Competent, flawed, occasional fun.

TIM WEAVER


www.thematrix.com
www.enterthematrixgame.com
15.05.03
ENTER THE MATRIX™
Written and Directed by the Wachowski Brothers, the creators of the Matrix™ trilogy
XBOX
NINTENDO GAMECUBE
PlayStation 2
PC CD-ROM
Shiny
ATARI
Enter The Matrix video game © 2003 Warner Bros. and Infogrames, Inc. All rights reserved.
Published and distributed by Infogrames Europe S.A. Infogrames and the Infogrames logo are registered trademarks of Infogrames Europe S.A. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. PlayStation and the PlayStation logos are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation and are used under license from Microsoft.
TM, ® AND THE NINTENDO GAMECUBE LOGO ARE TRADEMARKS OF NINTENDO. © 2003 NINTENDO.
TM & © Warner Bros.
WBIE LOGO: ™ & © Warner Bros.
(s03)

"For the first time, you can get your hands on it for free!"



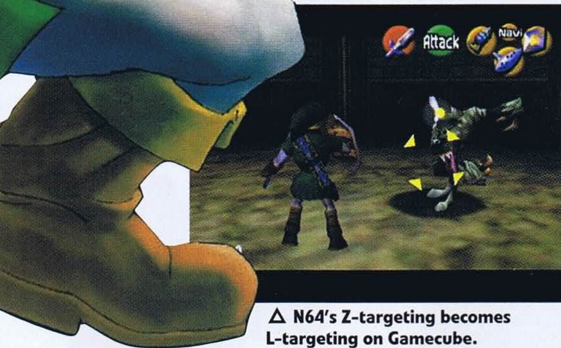
△ The Forest Temple is far tougher, thanks to more monsters and fiendish puzzles.



△ The in-game engine graphics engine is remarkably adaptable. Before its time.



△ It's *almost* as fun second time around.



△ N64's Z-targeting becomes L-targeting on Gamecube.



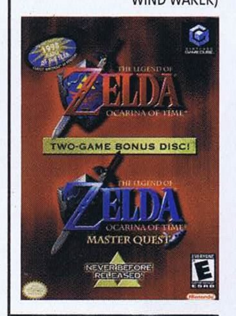
△ Hmmm. We don't remember this from playing the game last time around.

△ Your catty comes in handy, not just for shooting at things, but for looking around too.

OCARINA OF TIME MASTER QUEST

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	NINTENDO
DEVELOPER	NINTENDO
RELEASE DATE	MAY 3RD
PLAYERS	1
MEMORY CARD PAGES	15
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	YES
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	FREE! (WITH ZELDA: WIND WAKER)



Wake up, fairy boy! It's time to dust off the old Ocarina and get ready to take down the evil Ganondorf! And this time it's even harder…

GET INTO THE GAME

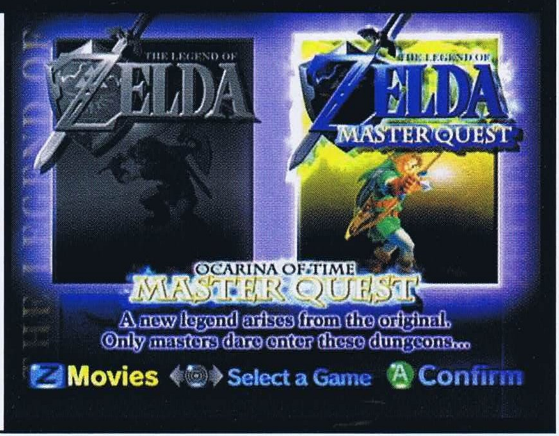
Two games to choose from, but the basics are the same…

ARE YOU FAIRY BOY ENOUGH?

Switching on, you get a choice between Ocarina of Time *and the* Master Quest*. Those new to Zelda would be well advised to go for the former to play the game as it was originally intended. Although the plotlines of the two games are identical, the* Master Quest's *dungeons are trickier, and not as pure, dammit…*

The control system takes a little getting used to, particularly when it comes to jumping, which Link performs automatically as he runs off the edge of objects. He'll grab onto ledges and clamber up surfaces where he can. Practice makes perfect.

Before you can enter the first dungeon, you have to strap on a sword - check out the passage at the end of the training area - and save up for a shield. And the Kokiri folk are awful careless when it comes to leaving valuables lying around…



Guaranteed gaming nostalgia with the impetuous elf-boy

HEALTH

You start off with three hearts' worth of energy, but this is increased as you go along and you will need it. Finding four heart-pieces adds another heart to your tally, as does completing a dungeon.

ITEMS

The A- and B- buttons are context-sensitive and their functions are displayed here. Equip special items to Left, Right and Down on the C-stick.



L-TARGETTING

Using L-targetting you can focus on an enemy while moving freely in the 3D world. Navi the fairy flies up to enemies and a tap of L locks on. You will now face your enemy as you move around.

MAP

A map appears in the bottom corner of the screen to aid navigation. But in dungeons you'll have to find the map first, and then a compass. They'll be hidden away in treasure chests.

LET ME PASS!

A little exploration goes a long, long way...



The problem: the Zora king is in your way, mumbling about his daughter. He won't make sense until he hears some news of her.



Off you wander to see what else there is to do. You can take part in a diving contest and your reward will be the Silver Scale...



...which allows you to dive deeper than before. Deep enough to dive through a doorway leading to Lake Hylia.



A nearby Zora tells you that many objects get washed up here, and sure enough, there's a bottle with something in it!



It's a message from the king's daughter. Show it to the king, who will duly move. Adventure on...



Nintendo's series of Zelda adventures have a long and proud heritage. They first appeared way back in 1986 on the NES, with the world of Link and chums expanded and enhanced through appearances on the SNES, Game Boy and N64. The N64's *Ocarina of Time* was, in its day, the very biggest and best game to appear on the system, with us awarding it a whopping 98 per cent way back in issue 24 of **NGC**. And it duly sold like warm, tasty buns. Staggeringly it outsold all other games on all formats in 1998, even the seemingly unbeatable PlayStation.

The Master Quest was originally created as an ultra-tough version of *Ocarina of Time* for the ill-fated 64DD, Nintendo's floppy-disk add-on for the N64, which was never released outside of Japan. But now, for the first time, you can get your hands on it, and all for free! As a special limited-edition bonus, this will be given away with *The Wind Waker*. And if that doesn't help Ninty sell a few Gamecubes, nothing will...

MASTER MIND

The game disc contains both the original *Ocarina of Time* and the Master Quest. While total beginners may be better suited to the gentler game, those who've played - and completed - the original will want to head straight for the Master Quest and all its promised newness.

But be prepared. There really isn't much new material here. The vast majority of the game, including plot, dialogue, side-quests - that is, everything you do 'outside' - is identical to *OOT*. From the moment you wake up in Kokiri Forest with a newly acquired fairy at your side, to your clandestine meeting with Princess Zelda, to trading masks from the Happy Mask shop, to planting those magic beans, you'll have done it all before.

> **"THOSE WHO'VE PLAYED THE ORIGINAL WILL HEAD STRAIGHT FOR THE MASTER QUEST AND ALL ITS PROMISED NEWNESS..."**



RUPEES - WHOOPEE!

Perhaps the most annoying thing about these swanky new dungeon layouts is that some of the most difficult-to-get-to chests, which (cast your minds back) used to reward you with tasty items, now contain nothing but dull old rupees. What a swiz, eh?

"Bet you forgot all about the singing frogs…"



△ They *look* like FMV sequences, but it's all done by the in-game engine.



△ Uh-oh, it's boss time again. The key is in whatever item you've just discovered.



△ Link has to grow up rather quickly, and seven years goes by in a flash. Big Link wakes up to find that the Land of Hyrule is in serious trouble. To the rescue!



△ Just look at that trail of bomb flowers going up the wall… some mighty chain reactions have been added to Dodongo's Cavern but they're really just another way of opening doors.



△ Lazy ol' Princess Ruto insists on being carried everywhere. But she comes in handy for some of the weight-operated puzzles.





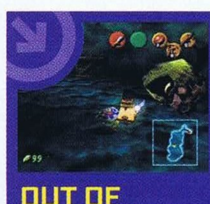
△ Choose carefully which items to equip to the C-stick.

BOSS BATTLE

It wouldn't be a worthy dungeon if it didn't have a dirty great boss at the end to send packing.

Bio-electric Anemone
BARINADE





OUT OF PLACE

The dungeons are made much tougher by introducing nastier enemies earlier on. And while this makes it undeniably more challenging, they can seem out of place. Ghostly Poes in Dodongo's Cavern just don't make as much sense as in the spooky graveyard or haunted Forest Castle…

The main differences are in the dungeons, and even they are pretty subtle. The dungeon layouts are identical, but you'll find chests and important items in different places to last time, a few tweaked puzzles, and, of course, more numerous baddies to fight. But we can't help feel that some of these changes detract from the subtlety of the game; after all, the original was meticulously planned, playtested and tweaked to perfection. It's as if the locations or puzzles have been changed solely for the sake of making a difference, more than anything else.

There are different puzzles, though they are generally limited to the same room or two as the puzzle they replace, and they mostly boil down to you having to find a different method to opening doors. In Dodongo's Cavern you'll have to set off chain reactions with bombs, which is quite jolly. And for some crazy reason you'll find cows embedded in Jabu-Jabu's stomach. Taking pot-shots with your catapult is key to making progress. It also means

"IT'S AS IF THE LOCATIONS HAVE BEEN CHANGED SOLELY FOR THE SAKE OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE, MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE…"

Guaranteed gaming nostalgia with the impetuous elf-boy

NGC FIELD OF PLAY

It's a big bad world out there...

OUT IN THE OPEN

The Land of Hyrule is truly ginormous, consisting of several distinct areas, linked together by Hyrule field. Although you're welcome to go off exploring, you're prevented from straying too far from the main quest until you have found certain items that unlock new areas.

A BIT ON THE SIDE

Not quite sure what to do next? Don't worry, you can always come back to it, and you'll find there are dozens of side-quests to keep you occupied...

MAKE IT SHORT

Traversing this huge grassy area takes ages, but luckily there are several shortcuts. The key is often something awarded in the new area's dungeon.



△ The Jabu Jabu dungeon takes place entirely in a fish's stomach. Let's hope we're not in the lower colon, eh?

△ Yes, yes. We know that bombs can be dangerous. But blowing things up is such jolly good fun...

△ Once you've got the Silver Scale, you can dive deeper.

you won't be able to cheat your way through with the wonderful N64 Guide to *Ocarina of Time* we published a few years ago.

The bigger picture stuff is the same. You'll have to launch yourself from the top floor to break open the spider's web in the Deku Tree, deposit bombs in the Dodongo's eye sockets to open the way to the boss' chamber and carry the Princess around Jabu-Jabu's belly, plonking her on switches while you go off and explore.

You'll certainly find it tougher though, with baddies being introduced earlier and in greater numbers. But if you're a seasoned Link, you won't have too many difficulties dispatching them.

In that gentle introduction to the game, the Deku tree, you'll be challenging Gohma Eggs the moment you set foot inside, rather than waiting until you meet the boss, for example. And talking of bosses, they're identical to those in *OOT*, so the same strategies work here – if you can remember them that is. Because, although you'll probably recall moments from the last time you kicked Ganondorf's arse, chances are we're talking a good five years ago, and you'll have forgotten a few of the finer details...



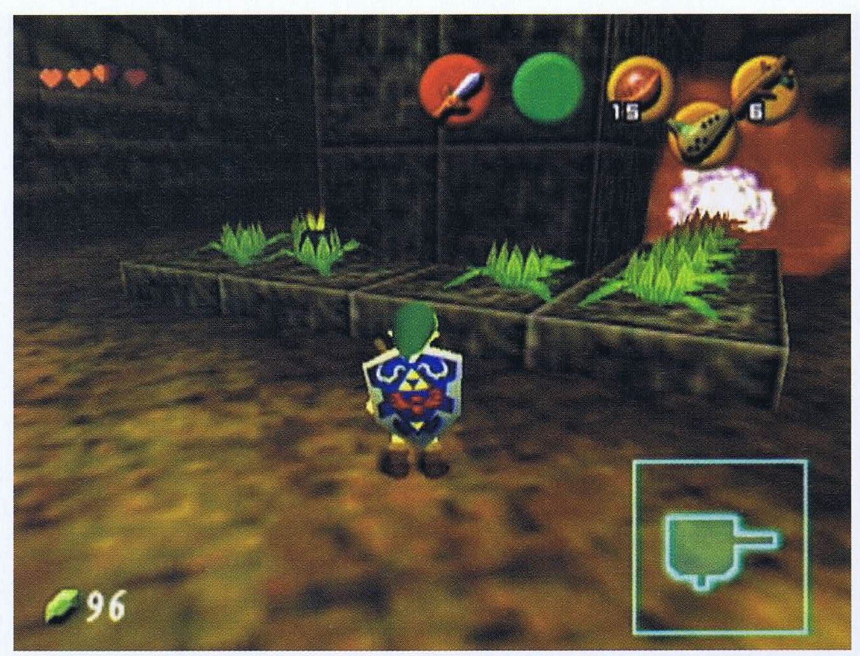
YOU HUM IT, SON...

Music is a very important component of the game, and Link has to learn some funky tunes as he goes through the game. You'll soon find that playing them on the Ocarina is the key to many of the game's puzzles, so if in doubt, whip it out!

GOOD TO BE BACK

But rediscovering them again is a great joy. Nostalgia is a powerful tonic and, as the land of Hyrule unfolds, it reminds you just how vast, original, and downright clever the whole thing is. You'll nod knowingly when you first glance the huge web in the middle of the Deku tree, laugh yourself silly when a song and a dance lifts the Goron King's mood and your mouth will hang

"Chances are that you'll have a little unfinished business here"



△ **The majority of the puzzles are the same, but you'll still derive satisfaction figuring them out all over again – the passage of time ensures you won't remember *exactly* what to do.**



△ **Even the most innocent-looking objects have their uses somewhere in the game, and bottles can carry anything from fish to fairies…**

IT'S A MAD WORLD

Whether or not you've played it before, Zelda is a huuuuge game that will take weeks to complete. There's so much to see and do, but best of all is forgetting about saving the world and immersing yourself in the bonkers side-quests. It's full of pure Shigsy-influenced nonsense, that, in the world of Hyrule, does make a crazy kind of sense!

SAME OLD, SAME NEW?

So what sets this apart from plain old Ocarina of Time?

DEJA VU FOR YOU

You won't find anything out of the ordinary when you're wandering around outside the dungeons. The Land of Hyrule is just the same as it ever was. You'll find that you follow the same plot, meet the same old characters, the dialogue is word-for-word, and the side-quests are identical. But then again, it's the moments like singing with the scarecrow, milking cows and racing horses that are an integral part of the charm.



MONSTERS, MONSTERS, EVERYWHERE

It's got much tougher this time around, and you'll find yourself right in the thick of it from the very start. The Deku Tree, which kicks off with the gentlest of learning curves, now replaces the relatively harmless Skulltulas with hard-as-nails Gohma eggs as one of the first creatures that you'll encounter. But then, this is designed for ultra-hard, battle-hardened Links.

HOLY COW!

Must have been something he ate… You'll find cows embedded in Jabu-Jabu's stomach lining, and you'll soon discover that whacking them hard with your catapult is the key to solving most of the new puzzles here. But to be frank, it's more of a lick of paint than a major restructuring; it's really just an alternative way of opening doors. The bigger, more complex dungeon-spanning puzzles have been left well alone.





NOT SO CLEVER

Here's an example of why newer doesn't necessarily mean better. In Dodongo's Cavern there's one part where you finally manage to expose a Bomb Flower way up high. This Flower seems to be the key to blowing open a wall, which is further down on the lower level. But try as we might the only solution we could find to this was a blind, knee-crunching leap of faith, which made us take damage. Hardly elegant level design…

open, plus you'll dribble like a baby, as the FMV-like sequences (completely generated by the in-game engine) advance the storyline. Bet you forgot all about the singing frogs, the secret of the windmill, and how you eventually won Epona…

There are downsides to having played it all before though. Often an action will bring back memories of how you did something the last time around, but the hazy, fickle mists of time will make you forget *exactly* how you did it. Cue for many frustrated moments with you barking up the wrong tree or jumping the gun because you can't do it yet. In a strange kind of way, you'd be better off coming to the puzzle completely fresh.

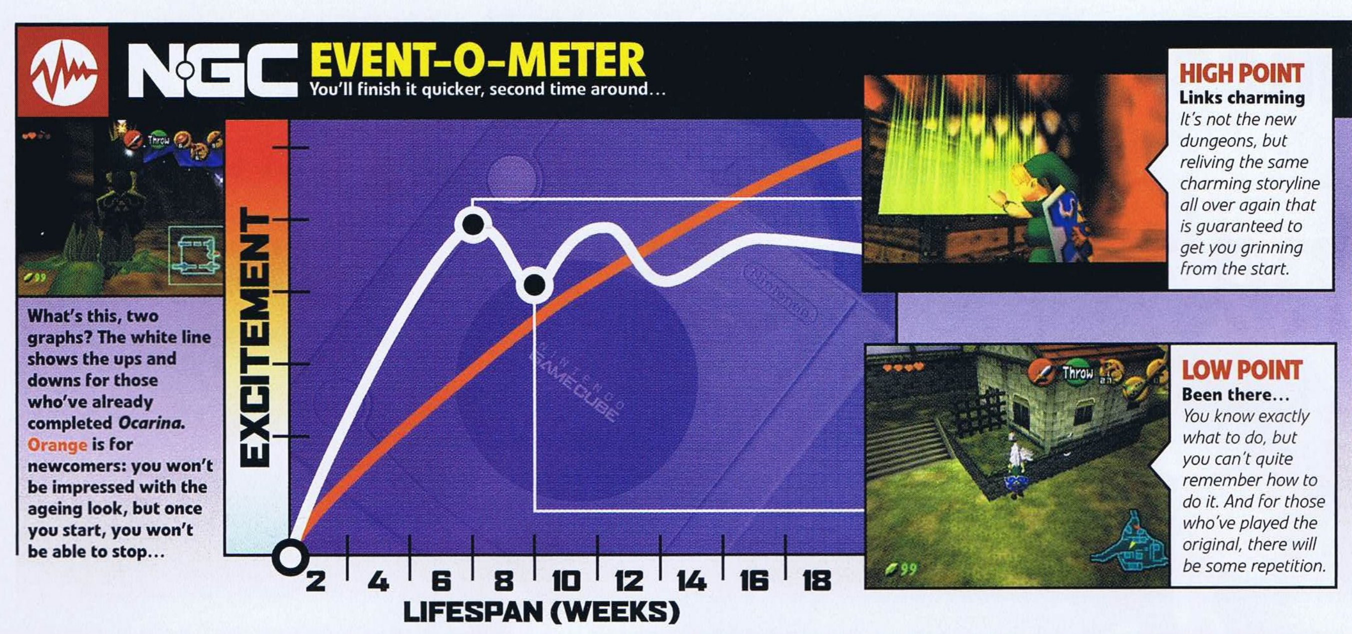
Or you might find yourself in such a rush to get on with the main quest that you'll clean forget some of the sub-quests that were originally stumbled upon as you wandered around aimlessly trying to figure out what to do, and so miss out important items. Sometimes, not having a clue is the best way to be.

POWERED UP?

You'd be hard pressed to tell the difference between the N64 and Gamecube versions too. Graphically they look near-identical, and bar a slightly less fuzzy look, none of the Cube's superior horsepower is called into action. The 3D recreation of the land of Hyrule that once stunned us is, it has to be said, looking a little rough around the edges now. The landscape looks angular and the occasional bitmapped object - such as those vines you climb up to reach Hyrule castle - are almost offensive in their crudeness. No

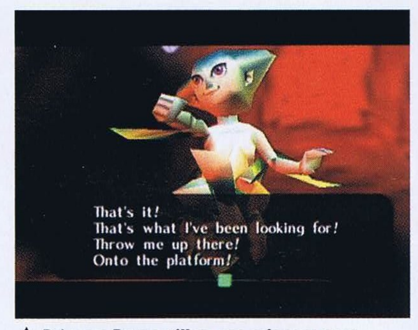
OCARINA OF TIME: MASTER QUEST

Guaranteed gaming nostalgia with the impetuous elf-boy





△ The dungeons have been tinkered with, rather than having a full makeover.



△ Princess Ruto: still as annoying as ever…



△ Tougher monsters, and lots more of 'em. The Master Quest will test even veteran Links to the limit.



WITCH WAY?

Of course you don't have to visit the great fairies that live in the caves around Hyrule, but you'll be glad if you do, as they bestow magic powers on Link. These range from sword techniques that dole out serious amounts of damage, to the smart bomb-like Djinn's Fire, which roasts nearby enemies.

improvements have been made in any other areas either. The sounds are the same, for instance, although it would be difficult to see how the haunting, atmospheric music could be bettered. In short, it really is as straight an N64 port as it gets.

In fact, the Cube version is actually inferior to the N64, if anything; every now and again there will be a glitch in the action as data is loaded in from the disc. The original was, of course, all stored in the cart, and so 'loading' was instantaneous. Mind you, Shigsy did say at the time that it would be impossible for the game to run on any other medium but a cartridge.

But enough of our whinging. Let's not let go of the fact that this is a freebie, and two games for the price of none can hardly be bad value, can it? All said, the Master Quest is still a wonderful, wonderful game, with many weeks of solid gameplay on offer. And in some ways the realisation that you've only touched the tip of the iceberg, and that you have much further to go ahead, only serves to increase your sense of wonderment.

"LET'S NOT LET GO OF THE FACT THAT THIS IS A FREEBIE, AND TWO GAMES FOR THE PRICE OF NONE CAN HARDLY BE BAD VALUE"

And, of course, chances are that you'll have a little unfinished business to attend to here. Thinking back, did you honestly, for example, get around to collecting all of those Gold Skulltula tokens the last time you played?

Of course, it's not beyond the realms of possibility that this is the first time you've ever played this particular *Zelda*, in which case you're in for a cracking old time. Though choose wisely whether you play the original or the Master Quest. Although there are two games on offer here, you really won't want to play both – at least, not within the same year or two.

So forgive the ropey graphics, forget that you've already been here, and just enjoy the fact that Nintendo are being so darned generous.

ADAM WARING



- Two adventures for the price of none!
- Charming as ever.
- Sixty hours' play.



- Master Quest ain't that different.
- N64 port – glitches and all.



The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker
Nintendo
NGC/79 96%
Obviously – especially as you get this thrown in too!





Ace on the N64 – but not a patch on the Cube's best.

8 SOUNDS

Atmospheric and haunting, central to the gameplay.



Still giant and seamless, but the cube can do more.



Months of solid adventuring to be enjoyed in here.

VERDICT

If you sent Ganondorf packing years ago, you'll feel right at home. And if it's your first bash, a splendid, magical romp awaits.







Δ Donald does the business dressed in a stupid helmet. All the default characters – except Pete – play exactly the same.



Δ He's going gem – get this – 'quackers'.



Δ The inconceivably rubbish Minnie Mouse.



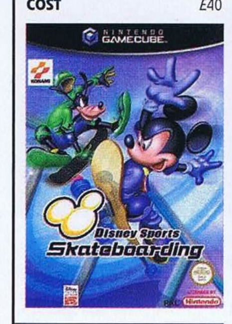
Δ You can grind pretty much anything you see in the game.



Δ There are plenty of tricks, and some nice trick effects – but it's certainly no *Tony Hawk's*.

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	KONAMI
DEVELOPER	KONAMI/DISNEY
RELEASE DATE	NOW
PLAYERS	1-2
MEMORY CARD PAGES	7
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40



DISNEY SPORTS SKATEBOARDING

Taking the Mick! Globe-chomping Disney gets its claws into old man Hawk… with okay results.

One of the great mysteries of our time must be how the likes of Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and – worst of all – Goofy ever became popular enough to make it to cartoons, let alone their own *games*. But they did, and they have, in this latest outing for the 'comedy' threesome, a decent-ish take on the superior *Tony Hawk's* series.

Okay, so it's decent-ish in a you-were-expecting-a-lot-less-from-it kind of way, but it still hangs together – *just* – if you ignore two sizeable faux pas.

Like the way, for example, there's no grind/balance meter, so you can keep on grinding an edge for as long as the edge goes on – at one point, we were looking away from the screen and Mick was still sliding his way along a pole.

Or the way the environments are either too sparse or too cluttered so that you're either short of stuff to trick on, or you simply don't have room to manoeuvre, let alone pull off combos.

Or the way you can be using ramps to gather speed and, say, *a car will just appear then proceed to run you over.*

But there is some alright stuff too. The tricks and combos are relatively easy to pull off, making this a more accessible 'boarding game than *Hawk's* – even if there's less skill, and therefore less satisfaction involved. There are also a couple of original little touches, such as the opportunity to use trampolines and speed pads, which sound rubbish but actually work quite well in practice.

Of course, there's no getting away from the fact that there are better options – but it's not a bad experience.

TIM WEAVER

> **"THE TRICKS AND COMBOS ARE RELATIVELY EASY TO PULL OFF, MAKING IT PRETTY ACCESSIBLE"**



Δ Minnie in Jud's Friday night clothes.



- Easily accessible.
- Plenty of tricks.
- The 'gimmicks' – ie, trampolines; pads.



- Very, very basic.
- No grind meter.
- Flawed level design.
- It's a Disney game.



Tony Hawk's 4
Activision
NGC/75 85%
The best skateboarding franchise money can buy. Simple as that, really.



7 VISUALS
The first level looks like a cheaper *Sonic*, but it gets better.

7 SOUNDS
Unbelievably, *heavy metal music*. Where's 'Wish Upon a Star'?

6 MASTERY
It does a job, though you won't see your Gamecube shaking.

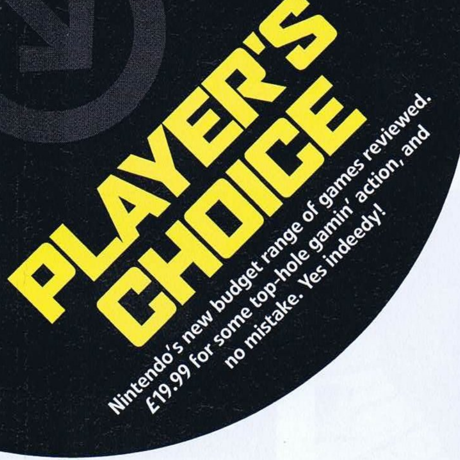
6 LIFESPAN
The parks are huge – whether you'll stick at them is questionable.

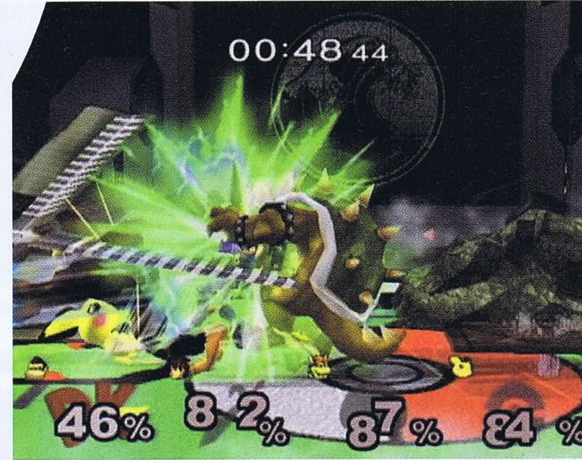
VERDICT

It's hard to hate it – despite its many deficiencies – but there's no denying this is a basic, if occasionally quite enjoyable, game.



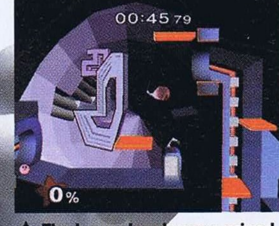
64




△ The most fun you can have with your clothes on. Or something. Anyway, four-player fisticuffs has yet to be bettered. This is ace.


△ Pichu! Like Pikachu, only smaller, quicker and cuter.


△ Some of the levels are insane, like this *F-Zero* one.


△ The bonus levels are a mixed bunch. Like this 'ere example.


△ Home Run is really addictive. Poor old punching bag.


△ A great big Bowser faces two Luigis. Hardly seems fair, does it? What's a scrawny little plumber going to do against a giant dragon?

SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE

The best fighting game ever made, and now it's only 20 earth quid. Will wonders never cease?

First, a recap. For those as yet unacquainted with *Smash Bros*, it's basically a 2D fighting game spliced with a platformer. Gorgeous, multi-levelled arenas mesh slinkily with balletic, triple-jump combat, and the game is stuffed with Nintendo mascots old and new. Each has their own style and abilities, and there's a raft of power-ups, lending credence to the much-muttered phrase that *Smash Bros* is essentially '*Mario Kart* with fists'. It's still an apt description, and accurately represents the wholesale fun found when four people are playing and the punches are flying. The music is to die for, too – brilliantly stirring symphonic renditions of favourite Nintendo themes.

But revisiting the game for this budget review is a tricky one.

Time and distance have lent us a new perspective on *Smash Bros Melee*. It's no longer quite the wild rush of astonishment we once thought it was, as by now we've exhausted the manifold options and modes it offers, and familiarity with the adrenaline-fuelled combat and eye-massaging arenas means that it no longer thrills in quite the same way. That it remains staggeringly good fun, however, is testament to its stature as one of the Cube's best games. Even if we've (perhaps controversially) reduced its score for this Player's Choice release, rest assured that everything we've said about the game in the past still stands, and if you have some chums up for multiplayer fun, you'll love it.

> **"NO LONGER GROUNDBREAKING, IT IS STILL A JOYOUS WHIRL STUFFED WITH THINGS TO DO"**

In the final analysis, it's no longer quite as groundbreaking as we once thought, but it remains a whirl of joyous, acrobatic chopsockery, stuffed to the gills with things to see and do. Smashing, literally.

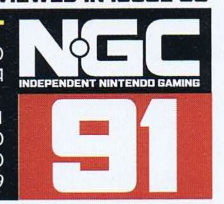
NGC STAR GAME


△ We love *Smash Bros*. Love it to bits. And we still play it at lunchtimes in the office.

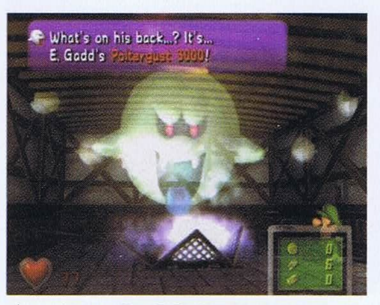
ORIGINALLY REVIEWED IN ISSUE 68

INFO BURST

FROM	NINTENDO
PLAYERS	1-4
MEMORY CARD	
PAGES	11
WIDESCREEN	NO
GBA LINK	NO
COST	£19.99




That's Dr E Gadd (arf!), last seen as the inventor of the magic brush in *Mario Sunshine*.



A big Boo. You'll find plenty of different ghosts in this mansion. Haunted, see?


Luigi's hoover can squirt flames, if you so desire. A curious device, to be sure.

LUIGI'S MANSION

Who you gonna call? A big-nosed Italian, that's who.



It's entirely possible that many people took one look at *Luigi's Mansion* and saw an Early Learning Centre version of *Resident Evil*. There's some truth in this, with Luigi's haunted house rendered in primary colours and bold, simple curves, but that's where the analogy ends. In its own way, *Luigi's Mansion* is easily as engrossing as Capcom's horror classic, and in many ways it's even more entertaining.

Just like *Ghostbusters*, the aim is to de-spook the Luigi residence by doing a spot of vacuuming. And while much of the game is simply spent tugging on the analogue stick in order to suck up errant ethereals, the quality of puzzles and sheer atmosphere is enough to compensate for the occasional lapse into repetitive gameplay.

The visuals, animation and sound are simply magnificent; even given the cartoon-like quality of the game, creeping through the house is decidedly spooky and, we can't help feeling, designed specifically to elicit a peculiarly childlike sense of being delightfully scared.

However, like *Smash Bros*, we've docked the game a couple of percentage points for its budget reappearance. There's rather too much retreading of previously-seen areas and the shortness of the action is even more apparent in these days of *Metroid* and *Zelda*. But even if short-and-sweet is the order of the day, Luigi is never less than highly entertaining.


It's lovingly rendered. Just look at that ghost! Truly an 'interactive cartoon'. Cough.

ORIGINALLY REVIEWED IN ISSUE 67

INFO BURST

FROM	NINTENDO
PLAYERS	1
MEMORY CARD	
PAGES	3
WIDESCREEN	NO
GBA LINK	NO
COST	£19.99


NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING 88


The onions provide a nice warm home to the helpful little Pikmin. Yes they do.


Pikmin might be a little on the short side, but it's a thing of wonderment.


Captain Olimar, in all his diminutive glory. Only 30 days to live, he has. Blimey, eh?

PIKMIN

Pottering around the garden has never been so much fun. No, really.



We all thought Shigsy lost the plot, originally. With no sign of a new *Mario* or *Zelda*, he chose instead to unveil a cute real-time strategy game set in a garden. Well, thanks.

But *Pikmin*, of course, turned out to be a real corker, and now that it's being sold at a knock-down price you'd be a fool not to snap it up. Really.

As stranded spacefarer Captain Olimar, you have to organise the indigenous Pikmin of the title to recover your wrecked spacecraft, overcoming natural obstacles as well as feisty predators.

Yes, the game is about managing resources and planning your time well – with only 30 days before your oxygen runs out, *Pikmin* demands you use your time efficiently. But while, on paper, it sounds rather like a PC strategy snoozefest, in reality it's an utterly charming game and neuron-fryingly addictive: the power-trip of commanding 100 Pikmin to do your bidding shouldn't be underestimated.

It all looks fabulous, too, believable and naturalistic, and the game, like *Luigi's Mansion*, is only really let down by its relative lack of longevity. Nonetheless, *Pikmin* remains a minor Nintendo classic.


Marshall the forces of the unstoppable Pikmin! March them to victory – or death!

ORIGINALLY REVIEWED IN ISSUE 69

INFO BURST

FROM	NINTENDO
PLAYERS	1
MEMORY CARD	
PAGES	19
WIDESCREEN	NO
GBA LINK	NO
COST	£19.99


NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING 86





△ A delectable slice of RPG history. Pencil and paper better be at the ready, because some of these dungeons are gonna take a looong time.





△ Dungeons and NPC encounters are all viewed in the first person – it's a shame this touch wasn't kept in for the second instalment.





△ The storytelling more than makes up for the rather bland battles.

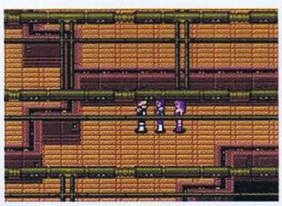


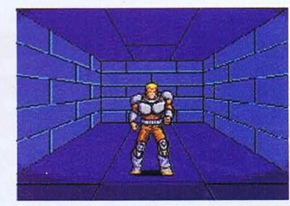
△ *PSIII* is the most ambitious, but probably the least enjoyable.





△ It's one of those games where you have to take a fair amount of…





△ …time making sure you're constantly battling to level up.

PHANTASY STAR COLLECTION

More retro retreading from Sega! Maybe not the prettiest thing in the world, but it's still got it where it counts…



As fond as we are of the *Phantasy Star* series, it just looks terrible by today's standards. A Master System game and two early Mega Drive titles don't make for pleasant viewing. In fact, they look rubbish. Many probably won't want to give these perfectly emulated RPGs a second thought, and, what's more, the 70 (and some) hours needed to finish them all will seem like some terrible form of perverted retro-torture.

It's unfortunate really, because those who are willing to put up with the archaic battle-systems and who allow themselves to make the leap in imagination that is needed to fill in some of the game's visual gaps will certainly find something to savour here.

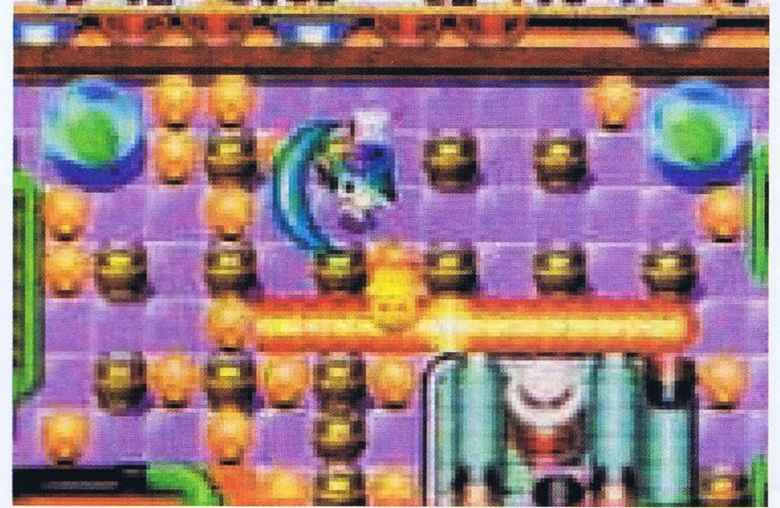
The game includes the first three instalments of the *Phantasy Star* series. The first is a very basic RPG affair (as you'd expect from a Master System game) with bog-standard dungeon-hunting and town-talking. The second, and arguably the finest of the three, spans two worlds, boasts unfeasibly large dungeons and an incredibly high difficulty level. The third is perhaps the strangest of the lot – you take control of generations of characters, marrying and giving birth to new ones.

> "FILL IN THE VISUAL GAPS WITH YOUR IMAGINATION AND YOU'LL FIND SOMETHING TO SAVOUR..."

They're three very different experiences, but – and this is the series' greatest asset – one thing remains consistent. The quality of storytelling in each adventure is superb and remains, even after all this time, the game's biggest draw. Even for that reason, we recommend you try it…







△ The power-ups remain pretty much what you'd expect, allowing you to drop more bombs, whiz around the levels faster and increase the radius of the detonations.



△ Finding bridges is one of the biggest challenges to navigating the wetter levels.



△ Mujoe. He's the bloke that's shrunk you and Max down to an easily squashable size.

BOMBERMAN MAX 2 BLUE

Fire in the hole as this explosive two-hander proves it's still da bomb.



Another oldie, but unlike *Crash*, still a goldie. Things haven't changed as far as the basic mechanics go. Once again you're a feisty little sapper in a crash-hat out to corner foes between your own special brand of firewall. Only this time you, and Max, have been miniaturised by the dastardly Mujoe who's… oh, stuff the backstory. Let's just see why we think you should get involved all over again.

The single-player is as addictive as it ever was, although the RPG elements of *Tournament* have been removed in favour of a more compulsive, level-by-level approach to the challenges. Also upping the reasons not to put this down are the Charaboms – bunny-like critters that act as mounts in the single-player, and Pokémon-styled combat assistants in the Battle mode. Targeting their different special abilities against either bosses, or a friend in the perpetually brilliant multiplayer, is just one of the moments where this game truly shines. And then you unearth the minigames, and then you finally break the back of a level that's been sending you buggy, and then you realise that the cynical ploy of having a Red and Blue version of the game isn't all that evil as it actually motivates you to link things up. *Bandicoot* take note; the secret to making a good sequel is to always to give the fans way more than they ever expected.



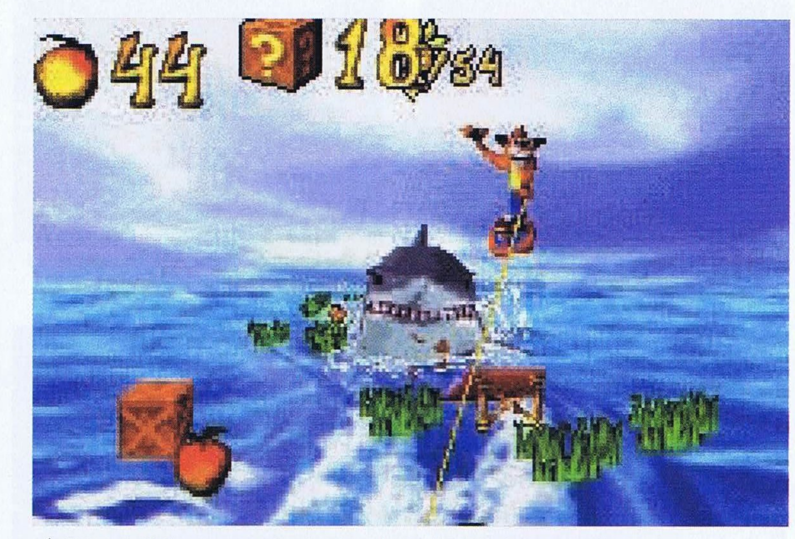


△ Matching the Charaboms' skills to the next level is essential for success.



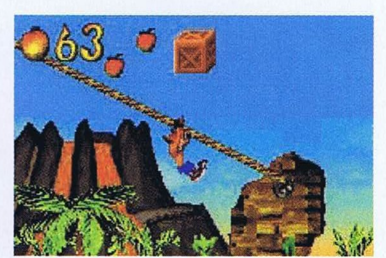
INFO BURST	
FROM	VIVENDI
PLAYERS	1-4
SINGLE-CART	
LINK UP	YES
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	NOW
COST	£30





△ This out-of-the-screen racing level against a shark is all very predictable.





△ Crash, seen here caught mid belly-flop and the hot-handed rope slide. Frictiony.

CRASH BANDICOOT 2

Crash! Ah-hah, saviour of the universe… again.



△ Freeing your bandicoot pals means you get to play as them. Here's Coco in space.



A new hypnotic enemy for Crash (hence the subtitle), a fresh set of minigames to master and a handful of new gadgets and gizmos. Have no fear though, your fuzzball hero from down under hasn't taken a sudden detour into the world of the FPS. Nope, just more of the same old platforming that we've become wearily accustomed to. True, there are only a handful that can present it with the conviction of Crash, but when you're faced with yet another round of spinning attacks and nitro boxes, it's hard to rev your motor much above a traffic-light idle.

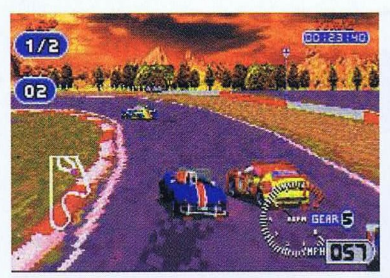
However, there are a few surprises in store – fortunately. Freeze boxes appear for the first time, acting like icy smart bombs, and an all-new magic carpet turns up to help you speedily traverse all those wide-open spaces. Plus, there's now a two-player link mode where the impressive physics of the atlaspheres can be enjoyed, and explored, in a head-to-head race with one of your mates. All fine and dandy, and yet it can't quite keep at bay the inevitable realisation that we've been here, and seen it, all before – even the wakeboarding minigame soon devolves into yet another typical chase out-of-the-screen.

So yes, you'll rip through the single-player levels and yes, you'll have a good time doing so. But the desire to return for those perfect time-trial scores and 100-and-whatever percent completion just isn't as great as it used to be.

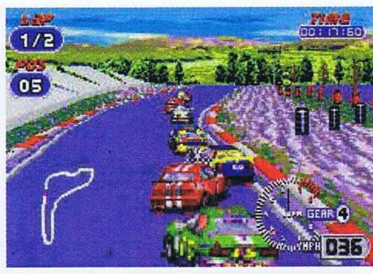


INFO BURST	
FROM	VIVENDI
PLAYERS	1-2
SINGLE-CART	
LINK UP	YES
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	NOW
COST	£30

"Race, and everything unravels like a badly knitted balaclava"



△ Unlocking some of the rarer vehicles goes some way to make up for the shoddy tracks.



△ The bunching of the field is a real pain in the tail pipe – spread it about a bit!



△ Both crash barriers and grandstands can dangerously draw the eye away from the track.



△ Be warned, driving without tailoring both suspension and traction will cause spin-outs.



△ Opt for the America Grand Prix and it's muscle cars buzzing around city-based tracks.

△ Your choice of race vehicles is governed by what team's driving test you pass.



△ You'll start off with an automatic transmission but the real speed is in manual.

TOCA WORLD TOURING CARS

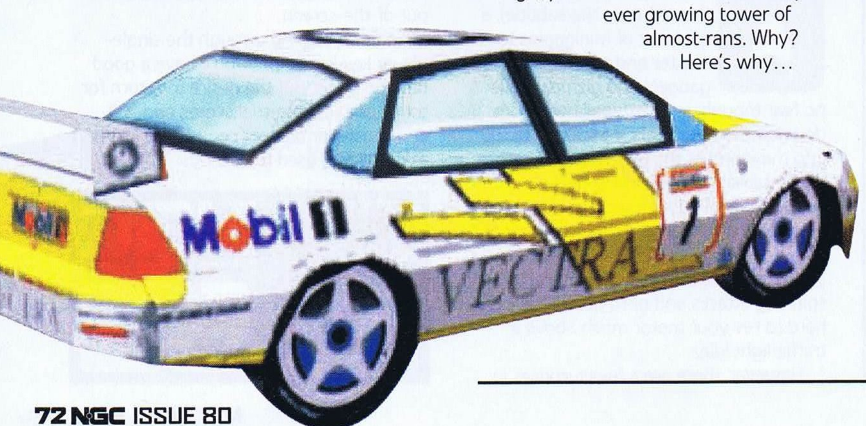
As far as TOCAmotives go, we're talking steam-driven with this detailed but tepid racer.

Visit the GBA reviews team – a miniature version of the **NGC** office contained in a shoebox under Jes' desk – and you'd have found our ill-defined, pixellated faces smiling when *TOCA* arrived. All the hardcore promise of the *GT*s but with the incentive of a four-way link-up and three international championships to race. If you'd returned two days later though, you'd have found the box atop our ever growing tower of almost-rans. Why? Here's why…

To start with, the game dazzles you with its impressive range of options. Pawing through the mountain of menus you slowly get yourself up to speed with track layouts via Time Trial, before entering the multi-layered Championship mode. Here, if you pass their tests, you can race for a number of fully licensed teams in either a European, American or Pan-Japanese grand prix. Qualify, and you're off to the grease-monkey realms of vehicle-tinkering across five different parameters. All sound as a pound. Then you race, and everything unravels like a badly knitted balaclava. We're not saying the game's bad, it just suffers from a few crippling flaws.

First up is the voice-sampling. Do well, and the position updates are reassuring. Drop anywhere below fifth and the repeated shouts of "Come on! You can do better than this!", slowly rot your passion. As does the catch-up physics that has you constantly shifting between first and last place. The engine noise rarely drops below a decidedly F1 pissed-off-bee-in-a-jar drone, and if you add to this a level of horizon pop-up that constantly draws the eye away from the track, you're looking at something you really have to work at to love.

> **"WE'RE NOT SAYING THE GAME'S BAD – IT'S NOT. IT JUST SUFFERS FROM A FEW CRIPPLING FLAWS"**









△ With a turning circle equivalent to Rick Waller in a shopping trolley, getting lined up for rail grinds is a nightmare, regardless of which of the four characters you choose.



△ To rake in the really big scores be sure to get great at the aerial tricks.



△ Get exits from grinds right and you just might discover a half-decent line.

DISNEY SPORTS SKATEBOARDING

Walt's creations decked out in their finest, but all trucked up nonetheless.



△ What will Disney Disneyise next? Real-time strategy? First-person shooters? Tsch.



△ Each level contains a skating bully-boy who deserves a good shoving as you pass.



△ As you'd suspect, Mickey is an all-rounder, and Donald a total speed freak.

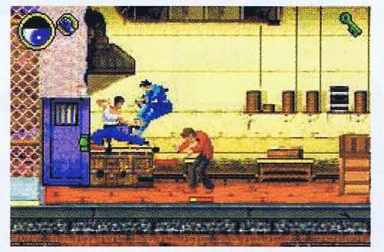
If only every sport could be Disneyised. Competitors laughing no matter how harsh the tackle and everything slowed to a pace even your gran could appreciate thanks to the compulsory wearing of clown shoes… yeah, in your dreams, weirdo. What we *really* want is everything the big boys of the extreme sports get, only scaled down. Which, as far as skateboarding is concerned, is a comprehensive trick-list, clearly defined – although challenging – lines and some good-looking, spacious parks to hurtle around. What you get from *DSS* is cluttered scenery that repeatedly locks your movement down, and lines that peter out way too quickly. That said, the trick system is pretty comprehensive, with aerials, manuals and a collection of very Disney specials – a half turn right on the direction pad plus A and R, for instance, turns you into a mini tornado. As for the parks, you get six to skate around, ranging from the urban Hillsbank Pallisades to the 50-50 heavy Abyssal Grind. And yes, the inclusion of applause-rated Crowd Jam does mix up the play. But even with this there's no getting away from the fact that *DSS* is still a sub-*Tony Hawk's* with a M-I-C… K-E-Y… M-O-U-S-E attached.

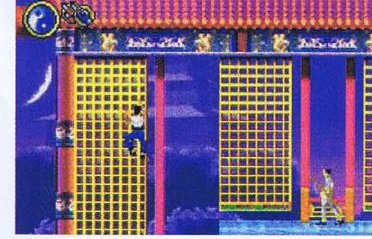


INFO BURST

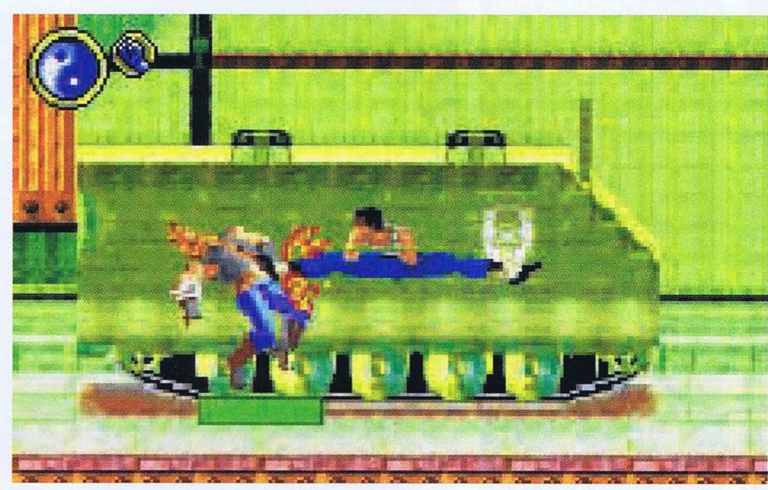
FROM	KONAMI
PLAYERS	1
SINGLE-CART	
LINK UP	NO
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	NOW
COST	£30

NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING 54





△ The highly detailed combat provides an impressive number of enemies.



△ Hit both shoulder buttons simultaneously and Bruce'll perform this split kick.



△ Boss battles aren't overly clever, but they do make for a decent change of pace.



△ Jump onto any pole and you can limit your descent by tapping the up button.

BRUCE LEE

RETURN OF THE LEGEND

Lee and you, you and Lee, lots and lots for us to see…



If only there was some way of getting bad lip-sync across in text. At least then we'd be able to do justice to the feel of this tight little side-scrolling beat-'em-up. Okay, we'll give it a try, just imagine our gobs flapping about at random while we tell you that this chop sueys a lot of the so-called 'superhero' brawlers that we've seen of late. Bruce's moves are pretty diverse, allowing him to do scissor kicks and sprint attacks, as well as over 38 other unarmed combos. Then factor in weapons like staffs, nunchakus and darts and you're soon looking at a stack of ways to take down the local ne'er-do-wells – even if they do tend to unfairly cluster around the tops of ladders.

Although combat is obviously a central theme, there's enough variation to keep you backtracking over the same territory in search of secret areas that house the rarer weapons. It's just unfortunate that when you do manage to locate the cooler tools you're never allowed to keep them between levels. It's a relevant niggle, but one that soon pales in the light of the collected stealth moves, mixed mission styles and, of course, a healthy dollop of "Pokah!" and shwo-shwa-shwo sound effects that bring the whole package home nicely. Jolly good fun, all in all.

INFO BURST

FROM	VIVENDI
PLAYERS	1
SINGLE-CART	
LINK UP	NO
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	NOW
COST	£30



NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING 71

FIVE FOR A PRIZE!

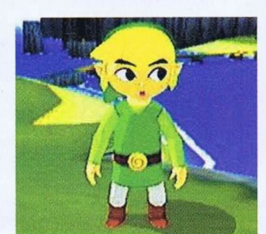
Of course, we could easily sit around all day making Top 5 lists, like crazed list-addicted John Cusack. In fact, we often do. But, as ever, we want YOU to do the work now. You've seen the format over the past few months, so send in your own Top 5 lists, children! Mwahahaha...

NGC ESSENTIAL

THE BEST CUBE GAMES MONEY CAN BUY...

TOP FIVE MEN IN TIGHTS

Inevitably including – straight in at five – "Anyone from any wrestling game, ever. They're all the same" **Hannah Shackleton** from **Lancashire** wins a copy of *Fire Pro Wrestling* for GBA!



LINK



VYSE



MAX ROIVAS



LEGOLAS



GENERIC WRESTLER





1 METROID PRIME — 97

NINTENDO ■ NGC/79

The beleaguered Retro were shoved back on course by the guiding hand of Shigsy to create the sublime *Metroid Prime*, Gamecube's best game so far. Pushes the envelope in every field to produce a polished, eminently playable, stunningly immersive adventure-cum-shooter-cum-platformer that will make you cry when it's over. Classic.



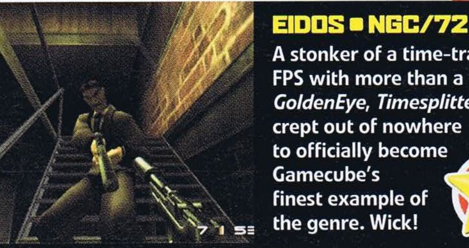
2 SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE — 96



NINTENDO ■ NGC/73

Mazza's cleaning up oily muck on a tropical island put there by an evil villain. With all the intuitiveness, polished visuals, and sense of pure fun of *Mario 64*, this pushes all the right buttons.

3 TIMESPLITTERS 2 — 92



EIDOS ■ NGC/72

A stonker of a time-travelling FPS with more than a whiff of *GoldenEye*, *Timesplitters 2* crept out of nowhere to officially become Gamecube's finest example of the genre. Wick!

4 SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE — 91



NINTENDO ■ NGC/68

Eye-singeing multiplayer, ingenious moves, cameos from about every Nintendo character ever, and some of the sweetest looks yet squeezed from the Cube.

5 WAVE RACE: BLUE STORM — 91



NINTENDO ■ NGC/67

Slight frame-rate problems in PAL, but *Blue Storm* is still a fabulous racer, replete with *the* most incredible water effects ever. Fast, dynamic, accessible and sublime to control.



6 PHANTASY STAR ONLINE — 90

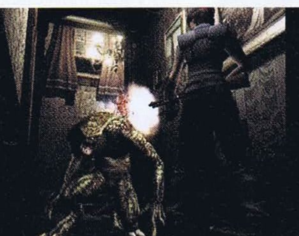


INFOGRAMES ■ NGC/78

Essentially *Gauntlet* with lots of numbers and menu screens, online *PSO* becomes an epic tale of crate-smashing, internet companionship, and fevered item collection.



7 RESIDENT EVIL — 89



CAPCOM ■ NGC/72

The classic zombie-horror fear-fest recreated to take advantage of the Cube's superior electrical witchcraft. Stunning, mesmerising visuals, unrivalled atmosphere and a brilliant storyline. Controls are still crap, though.

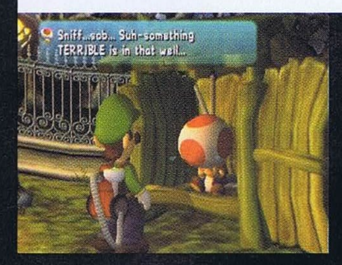
8 ETERNAL DARKNESS — 89



NINTENDO ■ NGC/74

A rollicking Lovecraftian yarn of ancient evils, *Eternal Darkness* replaces slick zombie-slaying action with a wonderfully creepy story told through a cast of 12 playable characters, and a truly innovative magic system.

9 LUIGI'S MANSION 88



NINTENDO ■ NGC/67

Brother Luigi ushered in the (first) year of the Cube with this fantastically playable combination of *Super Mario World* and Ghostbusters. It's maybe a bit short, but still ace. A truly interactive cartoon, and then some.

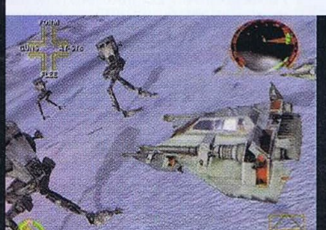
10 SUPER MONKEY BALL 88



INFOGRAMES ■ NGC/67

Ingenious update of *Marble Madness*, with simians rolling around strange landscapes collecting 'nanas. Chuck in a monkey *Mario Kart*, pool, golf and 'springy boxing' and you've got the weirdest, most wonderful GC game out.

11 STAR WARS: ROGUE LEADER 87



ACTIVISION ■ NGC/68

Rogue Leader bolts eye-popping renditions of the Battle of Hoth and the Trench Run onto silky-smooth space battles to produce the most memorable – and certainly the best-looking – Star Wars game yet. Well done, Lucas.

12 TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3 87



ACTIVISION ■ NGC/67

A no-brainer PS2 conversion, but *TH3* is so good it hardly matters. Packed with mental grinds and stunts, backed up by a mountain of hidden extras and vast skate parks – if you haven't tried *Hawk's* before, now's the time.

13 SSX TRICKY 87







EA ■ NGC/69

Has PS2 written all over it in big, fat neon letters, but still works wonders with your Cube. Fast, spectacular courses, shortcuts and secrets and some mid-piste scrappage make this conversion brilliant, *brilliant* entertainment.

14 BURNOUT 86

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67

With bone-splintering, lightning-fast, spectacular crashes, twitchy, inch-perfect handling and one of the smoothest, most impressive engines around, *Burnout* is a dream of a game, even if it's over a bit quickly.

15 LOST KINGDOMS 86

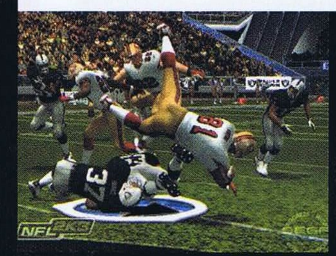


ACTIVISION ■ NGC/70

CCG-ing comes to the Cube in this accomplished RPG, in which you collect cards and battle mythical monsters in pretty fantasy landscapes. Might not sound like much, but *Lost Kingdoms* is far more than the sum of its parts.

16 NFL 2K3 86





INFOGRAMES ■ NGC/79

A meaty slice of gridiron sim that's a genuine threat to the towering Madden franchise, *NFL 2K3* has bagfuls of management roughage that doesn't detract from the gameplay. Tough as boots, but well worth the effort.

17 PIKMIN 85



NINTENDO ■ NGC/69

Created using textures from Shigsy's own garden, *Pikmin* is a wonderful real-time strategy with multi-coloured vegetables, beautifully simple controls and expansive, tactile worlds. Over a bit quickly, but this is still Nintendo genius.

18 RESIDENT EVIL ZERO 85



CAPCOM ■ NGC/78

Twice the guns, twice the fun? *Resi Zero* ditches the old solo formula for a two-character system. Great set-pieces, looks lovely – basically, it's more *Resi*. If it ain't broke, don't fix it. Well, apart from the crap controls. You can fix those.

19 TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4 85



ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75

The world's only 'boarder to be eligible for a Senior Citizen's Railcard stars in yet another game. No time limits (hurrah!) and some great RPG elements and minigames complement the larger areas – a well-tweaked fourquel.

20 EXTREME G 3 85

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67

A bit of an underrated gem, *XG 3* offers pulse-shattering speed, huge, sprawling tracks, some ingenious weaponry and eye-spanking visuals. It's a tiny bit soulless, and the multiplayer's somewhat rank, but this is good stuff.

TOP TEN GBA GAMES



1 ADVANCE WARS
A cute-looking turn-based strategy game it may be, but underneath is a frighteningly addictive, super-challenging masterpiece that'll hook anyone experiencing it. Frankly, one of the best games we've played.

2 METROID FUSION
Everything that has ever made *Metroid* great can be found here. A sprawling environment littered with baddies and an imposing difficulty level. It has a great link-up feature with *Prime* too…

3 SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 2
This slightly tweaked version of the SNES classic boasts a massive game world and some of the tightest level designs ever. Stone-cold classic.

4 YOSHI'S ISLAND
Stunning level design, fiendish puzzles and secrets all topped off with some beautiful pastel-shaded visuals. Another essential 2D platformer for GBA.

5 SUPER MARIO KART ADVANCE
Much like the superb SNES original: burn around multi-coloured tracks dishing out justice with weapons.

6 STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3
An incredible conversion of one of the best fighters ever. Massive single-player and a brilliant two-player experience.

7 BROKEN SWORD
Perfect for those long journeys. A gripping storyline, sharp, sarcastic dialogue, some sweet visuals and a more efficient control system.

8 CASTLEVANIA HARMONY OF DISSONANCE
More accessible than its previous GBA outing, this is classic *'Vania*. Imaginative bosses, a steep challenge and very atmospheric.

9 BALLISTIC ECKS VS SEVER 2
Hands-down the best FPS on GBA. Technically brilliant, and both easier on the eye and more engaging than *Doom*.

10 GRADIUS ADVANCE
The best shooter on GBA, and it's doubtful many will ever get close. Classic *Gradius* gameplay, with innovative levels and fantastic bosses.

NGC DIRECTORY

Your at-a-glance guide to everything the Cube has to offer…

HOW IT ALL WORKS

A little screenshot of the game in question…

Title, score, publisher, and where to find the review.

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA 2: NOW WE ARE FOUR **32**

BARDWARE ■ NGC/9999.99
Ill-advised platforming sequel to the adaptation of a little-known Shakespeare play. The only Cube game that came with a free merkin.

A brief outline of what to expect and whether you should consider it…

18 WHEELER PRO AMERICAN TRUCKER — 48



ACCLAIM ■ NGC/68
Drive your truck from A to B and avoid 'smokey'. A bit like *Out Run* with 'rigs', but the arcade version with the sit-in cabinet was better.

2002 FIFA WORLD CUP — 30



EA ■ NGC/69
About as much fun as being told your parents have been crushed to death in a horrific car crash. And then contracting Weil's Disease.

ACE GOLF — 74



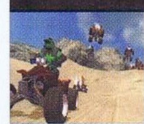
EIDOS ■ NGC/74
A highly enjoyable, relaxing sticksie-ball game that treads a pleasant middle-ground between fun and serious.

AGGRESSIVE INLINE — 81



ACTIVISION ■ NGC/72
Gentle *Tony Hawk's* alterno-clone – this time you're skating around massive arenas, 'busting' tricks on a pair of them there 'roller-boots'.

ATV QUAD POWER RACING 2 — 70



ACCLAIM ■ NGC/77
Wave Race on land with bouncy farming utility vehicles. Competent enough, but there's plenty of superior racing fare out there.

BARBARIAN — 70



VIRGIN ■ NGC/72
A button-mashing fantasy battler complete with fully-smashable arenas. Fun for a while – but it's not as good as *Smash Bros.*

BATMAN VENGEANCE — 70



UBI SOFT ■ NGC/67
Cel-shaded platforming cartoon bat-action. One of the first Cube games that came out – but it's looking pretty ropey already.

BEACH SPIKERS — 79

INFOGRAMES ■ NGC/72
Volleyball, as played on sand. Brilliantly addictive with four players, but the single-player's longevity lets the side down.

BIG AIR FREESTYLE — 28



INFOGRAMES ■ NGC/75
Yet another awful off-road bike title. The kind of game that makes you want to cry the second you've started playing. Don't bother.

BLOOD OMEN 2: LEGACY OF KAIN — 72



EIDOS ■ NGC/77
Gamecube's other undead hack-fest. After 1,000 years of slumber, evil vampire lord Kain is awake and hungry. Breakfast, anyone?

BLOOD RAYNE — 65



MAJESCO ■ NGC/79
Vampire fun. Dismember Nazis, fire a staggering array of period weaponry, and battle an evil priest driving an armoured pulpit. Yup.

BLOODY ROAR: PRIMAL FURY — 74



ACTIVISION ■ NGC/68
Competent-enough morphing-into-animals fighting shenanigans, but *Capcom vs SNK* and *Mortal Kombat* have since surpassed it.

BMX XXX — 48



ACCLAIM ■ NGC/76
Childish, boring BMX game featuring pneumatically-enhanced strippers showing you their nipples. Get a girlfriend instead.

BOMBERMAN GENERATIONS — 70



VIVENDI ■ NGC/76
Yet another update of the venerable arson franchise. Single-player is enjoyable if a little tedious; four-player is as addictive as it ever was.

CAPCOM VS SNK 2 EO — 79



CAPCOM ■ NGC/72
A great game, but purist retro freaks will want to fork out for one of those enormous, clunky arcade sticks to get the most from it…

CEL DAMAGE — 60



EA ■ NGC/66
Silly cel-shaded car-combat game in the vein of violent Warner Bros cartoons. Far too manic and confusing for its own good.

TOP FIVE ALANS

PARTRIDGE
Norwich's motel-dwelling, blazer-wearing, Pandora's Box-opening prodigal son. The sorrowful personification of the England of Welcome Breaks, Radio 2, and chronic closet alcoholism.
ALAN FACTOR: 8.9

RICKMAN
Villainous, sneering potato-stealing/tower-block bombing/maiden-ravishing cinematic stereotype. Also arguably the least Alan-ish Alan.
ALAN FACTOR: 5.7

HANSEN
Scary-eyed scarfaced football pundit. Hansen intimidates his more affable colleagues by flatly contradicting everything they say and then staring at them hard with his horrible, dead, sharklike orbs.
ALAN FACTOR: 6.0

WHICKER
Well-travelled Alan with great nasal intonation and top-rank blazer-wearing and moustache-sporting skills. A most venerable example of Alan-ness indeed.
ALAN FACTOR: 9.1

MADDRELL
Pipe, sandals, solitary T-shirt, weekends suspiciously spent "in Southampton". An overlooked, yet truly classic model of Alan. Other AOL Keywords: Socks; Speedos; Cup Of Tea; Neatly-Folded Paper; Relaxing Radox Bath.
ALAN FACTOR: 9.5

CRASH BANDICOOT THE WRATH OF CORTEX — 40



VIVENDI ■ NGC/75
One of the worst ports we've seen – and of a game that was a stinking load of crap to begin with, too. Avoid like death him (or her) self.

CRAZY TAXI — 70



INFOGRAMES ■ NGC/67
Ancient title that's so old it's now been included as one of the minigames in *GTAIII*. Creaky graphics, but still good fun.

DARK SUMMIT — 51



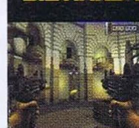
THQ ■ NGC/69
Think *SSX Tricky* but with all the speed, style and entertainment removed with near-surgical precision. A waste of time.

DAVE MIRRA 2 FREESTYLE BMX — 75



ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67
Pornography-free moto-cross game that's actually good. Slick, smooth with big arenas – but this will only appeal to the BMX hardcore.

DEFENDER — 50



MIDWAY ■ NGC/79
Rather pointless 3D update that makes one of the hardest-core arcade classics really easy, and by extension, depressingly dull.

DIE HARD VENDETTA — 80



VIVENDI ■ NGC/74
Wear a vest and shoot holes in people who look like terrorists, so America can enjoy one more night of guiltless slumber. Sweary.

DISNEY'S MAGICAL MIRROR — 26

DISNEY ■ NGC/73
A cruel form of torture as The Mouse patronises his way through this hideous 'adventure'. Almost Beckettian in its non-eventfulness.

DISNEY SPORTS FOOTBALL — 69



KONAMI ■ NGC/76
Oddly enough, this isn't anywhere near as bad as you may think. It's an amusing, simple footie game, ideal for younger gamers.

DONALD DUCK GOIN' QUACKERS — 32



UBI SOFT ■ NGC/68
A bit like *Crash Bandicoot*, except with The Duck in charge, wearing a sailor's costume and going bthackakackthh. Also total rubbish.

DOSHIN THE GIANT — 62



NINTENDO ■ NGC/74
Quirky title that puts you in charge of a giant schizophrenic yellow man who must help/hinder indigenous islanders. A little short-lived.



Every Gamecube game ever… rated!

DR MUTO — 70

MIDWAY ■ NGC/79
Amusing mad-doctor platforming game where you have to mutate into different animals to solve puzzles. Science is fun after all!

DRIVEN — 60

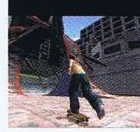
BAM ■ NGC/68
Very basic, very short game of the appalling film about driving fast in a large circle. Filling up bargain bins worldwide as we speak.

EGGO MANIA — 49

KEMCO ■ NGC/72
Rubbish take on *Tetris* that, mystifyingly, involves ovulations. Wouldn't look out of place on an Amiga. Pointless in every way.

ESPN INTERNATIONAL WINTER SPORTS 2002 — 37

KONAMI ■ NGC/67
Winter sports game combining tiresome button-mashing antics with equally dull timing and precision exercises. Dull.

EVOLUTION SKATEBOARDING — 78

KONAMI ■ NGC/79
Snazzy-looking *Hawk's*-clone, but then, as they said in the old Galaxy ads, why have cotton when you can have silk? Or something like that.

EVOLUTION SNOWBOARDING — 23

KONAMI ■ NGC/79
Fight bad guys while sliding down a mountain on a tray. Somehow even worse than *Dark Summit*. Games like these should be made illegal.

F1 2002 — 67

EA ■ NGC/71
Rock-hard racing simulator your dad will enjoy. Also features humourless German driving robot M Schumacher version 1.0.

FIFA 2003 — 83

EA ■ NGC/75
EA finally remember how good football games are made. Actually a bit better than *ISS 2*. Need we say it's also a vast improvement?

FIREBLADE — 59

MIDWAY ■ NGC/77
Nondescript brain-free helicopter game that will appeal to military memorabilia-collecting psychos and likers of bad 80s Vietnam 'movies'.

GAUNTLET: DARK LEGACY — 25

MIDWAY ■ NGC/68
We'd be far more comfortable with this travesty if we'd had it inserted rectally. An insult to the legacy of a venerable arcade classic.

TOP FIVE WAYS TO DISPOSE OF HIDEOUSLY HORRIBLE GAMES

CRUSH!
Run over with a bike, then a car, then a lorry, then a train, then lastly your fat sister or 'momma' (use custard doughnuts as bait).

BURN!
Attack savagely with a blowtorch or other flame-based cutting tool. Leave to cool then plunge into bath of boiling hydrochloric acid.

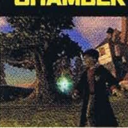
THROW!
Use for discus or frisbee training. Then make the fattest kid in PE class jump on it until he pukes.

SMASH!
Open Greek restaurant, use games as plates, then throw into fireplace while dancing to traditional plinky-plonky balalaika music.

COOK!
Cram two games side by side into cheap toaster, push down lever and secure with packing tape. Leave to toast for nine or ten hours.

Master Joe Greenwood of **Kendal** wins a copy of Trout Mask Replica by Captain Beefheart and his Magic Band for being so cruel to his poor mother.

GODZILLA: DESTROY ALL MONSTERS MELEE — 68
INFOGRAMES ■ NGC/74
Lots of good stompy, building-smashing monster fun in multiplayer mode, but otherwise a little weak. Get *Smash Bros* instead.

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS — 78

EA ■ NGC/75
Attractive and competent enough adaptation of Potter's film – but rather easy with it. Only die-hard speccy wizard fans need apply.

HOT WHEELS: VELOCITY X — 45

THQ ■ NGC/75
Basic racing/car-combat game based on plastic toys. Perhaps even coded in basic. Strictly for the very, very young. Or very stupid.

ISS 2 — 83

KONAMI ■ NGC/68
A winning formula mystifyingly tarnished with unnecessary 'improvements'. Still good – but also a step backwards.

JAMES BOND 007 AGENT UNDER FIRE — 70

EA ■ NGC/70
Slog around workaday gameplay in off-the-peg shooter upholstery, shooting baddies with ping-pong balls. Strangely unsatisfying.

JAMES BOND 007: NIGHTFIRE — 72

EA ■ NGC/75
The best Bond game on GC so far – and done with some flair – but tasty visuals can't hide an FPS that's a little lacking overall.

JEDI KNIGHT II — 67

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
A seriously disappointing PC conversion of an overrated shooter. Huge game, but quite tedious. Does little to improve on *Dark Forces*.

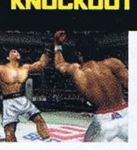
JEREMY MCGRATH SUPERCROSS WORLD — 20

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/69
Like a horrible nightmare about doing cross-country wearing nothing but steel-wool pants and barbed-wire flip-flops.

JIMMY NEUTRON BOY GENIUS — 18

THQ ■ NGC/78
Tedious, sorry, devoid-of-inspiration 'puzzle' game ('Y'know – for kids!') that actually manages to out-borify *Universal Studios*.

KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER — 75
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/73
Same old nutritious trick-based extreme-sports diet as usual, but this time in tubes made of water. Actually quite good fun, for a while.

KNOCKOUT KINGS 2003 — 79

EA ■ NGC/75
If the more arcadey nature of *Rocky* doesn't sit all that well with you, then it's worth giving this face-smashing simulator a go.

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING — 47

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/69
The gimmick of bringing back old-skool 'rasslers' is nowhere near enough to make this any good. A shambolic licensing cash-cow.

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING II — 50

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/76
Practically the same game as above. Yet another travesty of a wrestling game, made only marginally better thanks to the likes of Big Daddy.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS THE TWO TOWERS — 68

EA ■ ISSUE 78
Repetitive hacking game with faint RPG overtones. Guide your man through endless levels making goblin prosciutto and orc sausages.

MARIO PARTY 4 — 68

NINTENDO ■ NGC/75
Disappointing stuff. It's not bad if you're in the mood for board-game party fun, but it's done very little to improve on the originals.

MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2 — 70

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
Another decent-enough extreme sports sim. A bit slicker than *Dave Mirra*, but with smaller, tighter arenas. Does the job.

MEDAL OF HONOR FRONTLINE — 74

EA ■ NGC/75
Saving Private Ryan-style FPS set during World War II. Looks rather ropey in places, but it's atmospheric and highly enjoyable.

MEN IN BLACK II ALIEN ESCAPE — 45

INFOGRAMES ■ NGC/78
Rubbish off-the-peg third-person shooting game of the rubbish off-the-peg movie sequel. Did we say it was rubbish?

MICRO MACHINES — 57

INFOGRAMES ■ NGC/78
Like the recipe for bread or wine gums, *Micro Machines* doesn't change much, and this iteration is certainly no exception…

MINORITY REPORT — 39

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/77
Astonishingly brutal third-rate ass-whupping game that takes place on the sets of a Spielberg movie. Utterly, relentlessly violent.



DIRECTORY

Every Gamecube game ever… rated!

MORTAL KOMBAT DEADLY ALLIANCE — 80



MIDWAY ■ NGC/77
The best *Kombat* yet! The spine-ripping, blood-feasting yarn finally gets the update it deserves on Gamecube. Finish him!

MX SUPERFLY — 63



THQ ■ NGC/73
An MX game that handles like you're driving space bikes on the surface of the moon. The best of a very bad bunch, though.

MYSTIC HEROES — 71



THQ ■ NGC/75
Simplistic, repetitive 3D *Gauntlet*-style slash-'em-up that's somehow strangely entertaining and charming. Well, Geraint thinks so.

NBA COURTSIDE 2002 — 79



NINTENDO ■ NGC/68
The second-best basketball sim available, but it's still lacking somewhat. Strictly for hardcore fans of the Ball of B.

NBA 2K3 — 85



INFOGRAMES ■ NGC/79
A titan of a basketball game that puts all others to shame. Great gameplay complements a brilliantly engrossing career mode.

NBA LIVE 2003 — 70



EA ■ NGC/75
The predictable common-or-garden yearly EA update. Solid gameplay; lots and lots of lovely numbers; not much different from last year.

NEED FOR SPEED 2 HOT PURSUIT — 69



EA ■ NGC/74
Ironically slow, sluggish, speed-free racer. Yet another lazy port that's ruined what was originally a pretty entertaining franchise.

NHL 2003 — 64



EA ■ NGC/75
A more realistic approach to ice hockey which, while decent enough, isn't particularly fast or – more importantly – fun.

NHL HITZ 20-02 — 79



MIDWAY ■ NGC/67
Exaggerated ice hockey title in a similar vein to Midway's *Red Card*, where the sticks aren't just there for hitting the puck.

NHL HITZ 20-03 — 65



MIDWAY ■ NGC/74
Another year, another dose of frantic ice action. Still better than EA's take on the game – not much cop on the original, mind.

PAC-MAN WORLD 2 — 70



EA ■ NGC/78
The Pac is back for some hilarious retro-themed platforming fun. Shamelessly pilfers absolutely everything from *Mario 64*.

PRO RALLY 2002 — 58



UBI SOFT ■ NGC/74
An okay game completely and ruthlessly dragged down by its thoroughly awful, frustrating handling. Leave well alone.

PRO TENNIS WTA TOUR — 48



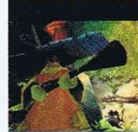
KONAMI ■ NGC/74
The only tennis game on Gamecube so far, but with rubbish non-analogue controls and some distinctly whiffy visuals.

RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP — 74



SCI ■ NGC/78
Surprisingly soild, does nearly all the things a rallying game should. Should do the job until *Colin McCrae* finally sees the light of day.

RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC — 84



UBI SOFT ■ NGC/78
The limbless floppy-haired French Freak™ has the last laugh with a Rayman game that, insists our correspondent, is actually good.

RED CARD 20-03 — 78



MIDWAY ■ NGC/71
Violent football game where you mince opponents with stud and fist until the meat shows. Should be called *Roy Keane's Red Card 20-03*.

REIGN OF FIRE — 59



BAM ■ NGC/76
A poor game of an equally poor film, even if you do get to burn stuff. Some nice ideas ruined by dodgy physics and controls.

ROBOTECH: BATTLECRY — 77



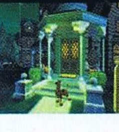
TDK ■ NGC/77
Stompy king-size robots go to war in the game of the crazy Japanese cartoon franchise. Not bad at all, as far as stompy robot games go.

ROCKY — 78



RAGE ■ NGC/74
A solid fighter where you guide Rockys one through five to punching greatness. Great two-player, loads of unlockable extras.

SCOOBY DOO NIGHT OF 100 FRIGHTS! — 36



THQ ■ NGC/74
Platforming non-action that will hold your interest no longer than half an hour, or until you need to go to the toilet; whichever comes first.

TOP FIVE ROADKILL RECIPES



BEAVER SCHNITZEL
Kill and flay beaver. Save tail for making soup/Davy Crockett-style hat. Dip beaver in egg, dust with breadcrumbs, then sauté whole in giant skillett. Serve with beer and Doritos.

HEAD SOUP
Gather five medium roadkill skulls (dogs, cats, rats), peel and boil in heavily salted water for one day. Add cabbage and simmer for one day. Serve with bat pâté and bone bread.

SQUIRREL PÂTE DE FOIS GRAS
Capture one Grey Tail Squirrel, place in a sturdy box, and fatten it on mashed grain. When the liver is tender, remove with a claw hammer then briskly bash together with cream and pepper until smooth. Eat.

MOOSE MOUSSE
Grill moose on sacrificial pyre until black as Hades itself. Place in blender with sugar and Chocolate-flavour Angel Delight, then pour out and whip hard (with a whip). Refrigerate, then enjoy!

HEDGEHOG SURPRISE
Place two dozen hedgehogs under a large plastic bag, and season with rocket, parsley and urine. Crush thoroughly with garden roller, pour into flan case, top with grated eyeballs then grill for three hours under a low, low heat…

Dangerous Dave McKay from Bishop's Stortford wins a blood-stained *Mortal Kombat* T-shirt.

THE SCORPION KING — 30



VIVENDI ■ NGC/75
Bad. Very bad. Guide a poor approximation of The Rock around and hit bad guys over and over until they bleed from the eyeholes.

SEGA SOCCER SLAM — 67



INFOGRAMES ■ NGC/74
Another cartoonish footie game with a major interest in violence and OTT moves. Cracking in multiplayer – poor on your own.

THE SIMS — 81



EA ■ NGC/79
Highly addictive people simulating comes to the Cube. A great sense of humour and endless potential for interior decoration and/or mischief.

THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE — 52



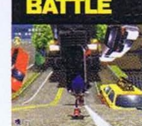
EA ■ NGC/68
A really quite bad *Crazy Taxi* rip-off, with various Simpsons characters bolted on, spewing repetitive 'funny' one-liners.

SMUGGLER'S RUN WARZONES — 78



ROCKSTAR ■ NGC/73
Impressive, hee-uge landscapes and fast-paced 'racing' in buggies and jeeps are let down by repetitive gameplay and awful robot music.

SONIC ADVENTURE 2 BATTLE — 70



INFOGRAMES ■ NGC/67
Sega's annoying mascot on Gamecube, now with an extra dimension added for some reason. Does anyone care anymore?

SONIC MEGA COLLECTION — 70



INFOGRAMES ■ NGC/79
If you have a hopeless retro arcade problem, you could do worse: seven Sonic games on one disc, accurate down to even the loading times!

SPIDER-MAN: THE MOVIE — 72



ACTIVISION ■ NGC/69
Dodgy control and camera issues are the only problems with this enjoyable platform adventure. Voiced by the original cast, too.

SPY HUNTER — 55



MIDWAY ■ NGC/68
Appalling frame-rate, nasty course design and dull linear racing make this one to avoid. Yet another pointless, crappy remake.

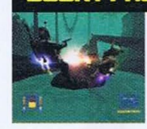
SPYRO ENTER THE DRAGONFLY — 40



VIVENDI ■ NGC/75
Much like *Crash Bandicoot*, this is another shoddy port of a game that was never really much fun in the first place.

STARFOX ADVENTURES — 72

NINTENDO ■ NGC/74
Disappointing adventure that's way too easy and linear. Not awful, but should have been far better. Hardly a fitting send-off for Rare, either.

STAR WARS BOUNTY HUNTER — 68

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/77
The panting, pot-bellied, totally rubbish space-assassin gets the *Tomb Raider* treatment in this distinctly average game.

STAR WARS THE CLONE WARS — 71

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
Enjoyable *Battlezone*-style tank blaster set around Episode II – not quite as good as *Rogue Leader*, but still fun all the same.

THE SUM OF ALL FEARS — 25

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/76
One of the most technically inept games we've ever played. Clancy says bury the copies in the Arizona desert before anyone notices.

SUMMONER A GODDESS REBORN — 68

THQ ■ NGC/79
As much levelling-up and numbers floating out of people's heads that you can eat. Crappy visuals, but a sprawling, engrossing adventure.

SUPER BUBBLE POP — 65

JALECO ■ NGC/78
Kind of *Tetris*-y flavoured *Bust-a-Move* for the Sunny Delight generation, with chemically-induced visuals and music. Wick.

SUPER MONKEY BALL 2 — 82

SEGA ■ NGC/78
The apes are back with levels even harder of core, and a mental new story mode involving love, betrayal and heinous banana-theft.

TARZAN FREERIDE — 59

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/67
Disney. Platformer. Do we really need to say any more? Workaday, jungle-based gameplay with the Seventh Earl of Greystoke.

TAZ WANTED — 52

INFOGRAMES ■ NGC/72
Some of the worst level design we've ever seen in this middling, frustrating cel-shaded *Mario*-wannabe platformer.

TETRIS WORLDS — 38

THQ ■ NGC/73
THQ manage to ruin one of the Best Games Ever by trying to make it 'better'. Again. Will anyone stop these people before it's too late?

YET MORE OF PAUL'S SENSE TALK

SHOELACES
"Don't bother wasting time with shoelaces. Simply carry some sellotape and use that to speedily secure your flapping footwear."

DANCING
"At the local discotheque put your fingers in your ears and watch everyone. You'll never dance again."

PAINT
"Water-based paint is non toxic. Take advantage of this by spitting mouthfuls of it at the wall, thus saving money and time on costly and inefficient paintbrush-based systems."

LITTLE PEOPLE
"There's no such thing as a midget. It's all done with mirrors and trapdoors. Fact."

HANDS FREE
"If you're using a hands-free kit for your mobile, then DON'T HOLD YOUR FRICKING PHONE, because then it's not a hands-free kit, is it? No, it's not."

TOOLS
"No man is a real man until he owns his own axe."

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003 — 82
EA ■ NGC/75
The world most efficient golf robot gets his own game. Actually really good, in a surprisingly arcadey way. Nice graphics, too.

TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON — 66

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/79
Clancy has yet another go at squad-based tactical ops, and this time things run a little bit more smoothly. Entertaining stuff.

TOP GUN: COMBAT ZONES — 71

VIRGIN ■ NGC/72
Tail-riding, wingman-being movie-based flyboy antics. GC's only flight 'sim' – pretty challenging, but we recommend you try it first.

TUROK EVOLUTION — 71

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/73
Relatively disappointing dino-hunting FPS sequel. Not as bad as *Turok 3* on the N64, but serious niggles let the series down badly.

TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER — 60

EA ■ NGC/76
As mediocre a platformer as you'll find, with an Antipodean twist. It's a solid example of the genre but nothing more or less.

UFC THROWDOWN — 51

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/73
Highly amusing freestyle thump-fest, where you lead your oily, grunting man to victory in some vague Greek-style athletic contest.

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS — 24

KEMCO ■ NGC/67
Anyone who makes a game that has you picking up rubbish deserves to be shot in the kneecaps, stuffed into a suitcase and hurled into the sea.

VIRTUA STRIKER 3 V2002 — 55

INFOGRAMES ■ NGC/69
Nice to look at, horrible to play. Rubbish AI and unwieldy controls make for a crap game of footie. Did we say it looked nice?

WORMS BLAST — 63

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/74
Annelids go to war (again). Kinda like *Bust-a-Move* in a puzzly-action kind of way, except this isn't anywhere near as good.

WRECKLESS THE YAKUZA MISSIONS — 51

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
Drive around like a lunatic and smash up cars and everything else that gets in your way. Sub-*Burnout* road-accident nonsense.

WWE WRESTLEMANIA X8 — 70
THQ ■ NGC/72
Okay wrestler, but with nothing particularly new and a way-too-familiar engine. Still, if you must insist in buying these things…

X-MEN: NEXT DIMENSION — 55

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
Duller than dishwater. Fighting-by-numbers stuff that offers very little of interest. Total waste of a pretty cool licence, too.

ZOOCUBE — 50

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/71
Insane puzzle game involving a rotating cube that sucks in orbiting animal parts and goes 'moo', 'oink', 'roar', 'quack' and sometimes 'wah!'



GEAR

Protection for your GBA SP, a carry case the size of a breeze block, expensive retro fun and the devil's own cheat device…

WHAT IS A BEST BUY?

Every month we'll pick out one piece of kit that stands head and shoulders above the rest and award it our coveted Best Buy badge. A Best Buy will combine superb quality with fantastic value for money – when we hand something a reward like that, you know it's worth investing in.

NGC BEST BUY





NGC BEST BUY

ACTION REPLAY

FROM DATEL ● £30 ● TEL 01785 810800

It had to happen. The cheater's best friend is now available for Gamecube, and while we reckon our I'm The Best leagues are fairly safe for the time being, this clever device has the potential to obliterate any world records you'd care to have a crack at.

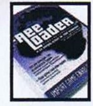
What the Action Replay does is mess around with the very guts of your games collection, changing mysterious bits of code to produce effects such as infinite lives, infinite time and so on. It works on almost every game you could think of, so if you're after an impossibly quick lap time on *Burnout* or a touch of invincibility in *Zelda*, this is the place to come.

Quite why anyone would want to take all the challenge out of a decent game is another matter, but Action Replay does have less destructive uses. Some of the codes activate weird and wonderful special effects (see below) that can give you a reason to load up long-forgotten games.

The current version has built-in codes for virtually every game up to the US release of the *Zelda Master Quest* disc, and it also functions as a Freeloader region-switcher, so you can play (and mess around with) import titles. Codes for newer titles can be added as they appear on Datel's codejunkies.com website, which is generally very quickly – the UK version of *Metroid Prime* had codes available almost as soon as it was released.

The one thing sadly missing is the option to create your own codes. Back in the old days, innovative **NGC** readers came up with Action Replay codes to unlock new multiplayer levels in *GoldenEye*, secret stuff in *Banjo-Kazooie*, and even the missing feather jump in *Mario Kart 64*. That isn't possible in the Gamecube version, but it's still a remarkable piece of programming.

BETTER THAN…

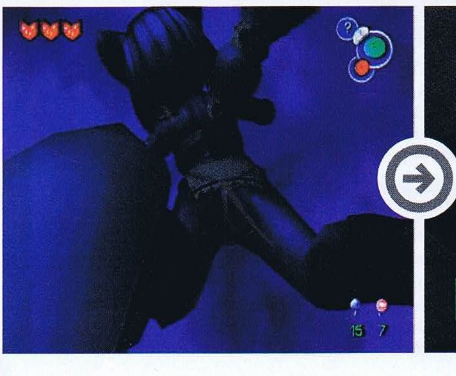


FREELOADER
FROM DATEL ● £20

The Action Replay does everything a Freeloader can, with the added bonus of helping you to finish games you've got hopelessly stuck on. Not that there's much satisfaction in beating *Ikaruga* with infinite lives, but…

HACKED

The codes that have freakish effects on games are by far the most fun. Invincibility will make you feel dirty, but giving Mario the ability to spin-jump half a mile into the sky will make you smile. Giant characters in Starfox show off screen-filling fur effects, and you can even make Agent Rayne's breasts swell until they fill the entire level. At which point the game crashes.









STARTER PACK FOR GBA SP

FROM THRUSTMASTER ● £15 NET WWW.THRUSTMASTER.CO.UK

Worried about scuffing the tasteful platinum paint job on your shiny new SP? Want some link-up action but don't have the right lead? Desperate for somewhere to stick your headphones? Then you need some sort of starter pack, but probably not this particular starter pack. The protective case is made out of some kind of alien skin that smells like new trainers, and includes space to wedge a few cartridges – not necessary, as the pack also includes two plastic cases of the type Nintendo used to include with all GB games before they upped the price and generously gave us plastic bags for our carts. The headphones are tacky, and the adaptor is actually a USB plug, which doesn't fit in an SP. Could be our review model is only a prototype, but we'd advise checking (and sniffing) before you buy.

NOT AS GOOD AS...



GBA BIRTHDAY SUIT
FROM NINTENDO ● £FREE
An SP, naked as nature intended. Until somebody makes a smart, snug, high-quality leather case, your SP looks better in the buff.

GBA SP CARRY BAG

FROM THRUSTMASTER ● £10 ● NET WWW.THRUSTMASTER.CO.UK

In one hand you have the smallest games machine since Nintendo stopped making Game & Watches. Slung over your shoulder, the most ridiculously massive carry bag imaginable, complete with foam cutouts to hold your SP and all its associated bits and pieces. It's about the size of one of those old-style tape recorders that newshounds use for radio interviews. Turn it around to hide the logo, get a microphone, and you could walk around shopping centres canvassing members of the public for their opinions on the issues of the day, then laugh at them when they get all nervous because they think millions of people are listening. Minutes of fun.

NOT AS GOOD AS...



NINTENDO 'CAMCORDER' BAG
FROM NINTENDO ● £25
Not specifically designed for the SP, but this well-built bag holds a Gamecube, some game boxes and accessories, and also has a detachable GBA wallet – which comfortably holds an SP too.



TV GAMES SYSTEM

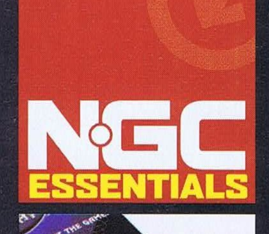
FROM JAXX ● £25 ● TEL 0845 603 1567

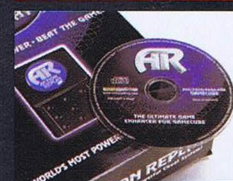
'A blast from Mum and Dad's past', claims the back of the box, under a photo of grey-haired parents watching their kids pretend to be excited by a bunch of shockingly basic retro games. But we can assure you that neither Mum nor Dad ever had an Atari 2600 console that actually fitted inside its own joystick. Load it up with four AA batteries, plug it into your telly, and marvel at the chunky squares that passed for 'graphics' back in the late 70s. Of all the ten games built into the rather brilliant packaging, Nintendo fans will probably be most interested in *Adventure*, which is effectively *Legend of Zelda*'s senile old Grandpappy. Nice gadget, but a bit steep.

NOT AS GOOD AS...



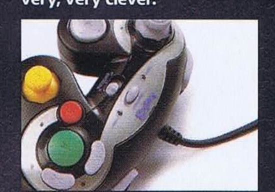
A REAL ATARI 2600
FROM WWW.EBAY.CO.UK ● £5 - £20
If you're serious about your retro gaming, there's no substitute for the real thing. You can pick up an Atari console for next to nothing on eBay, often with a selection of games. Make sure the joystick still works.





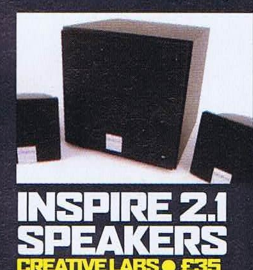
ACTION REPLAY

DATEL ● £30
Play all the import games you want, then hack them to pieces via a massive array of evil cheat codes. It's big and very, very clever.



PRO PAD

LOGIC3 ● £14.99
Still the best third-party controller around – we'll be surprised if anyone beats it. It's sturdy, the analogue is almost perfect, and it's comfortable to hold. Lovely.



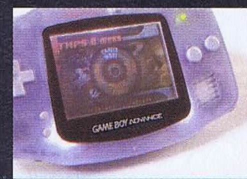
INSPIRE 2.1 SPEAKERS

CREATIVE LABS ● £35
After much deliberation, we figured that while they're not quite as good on the sound-quality front as Altec Lansing's speakers, at half the price, these offer better value.



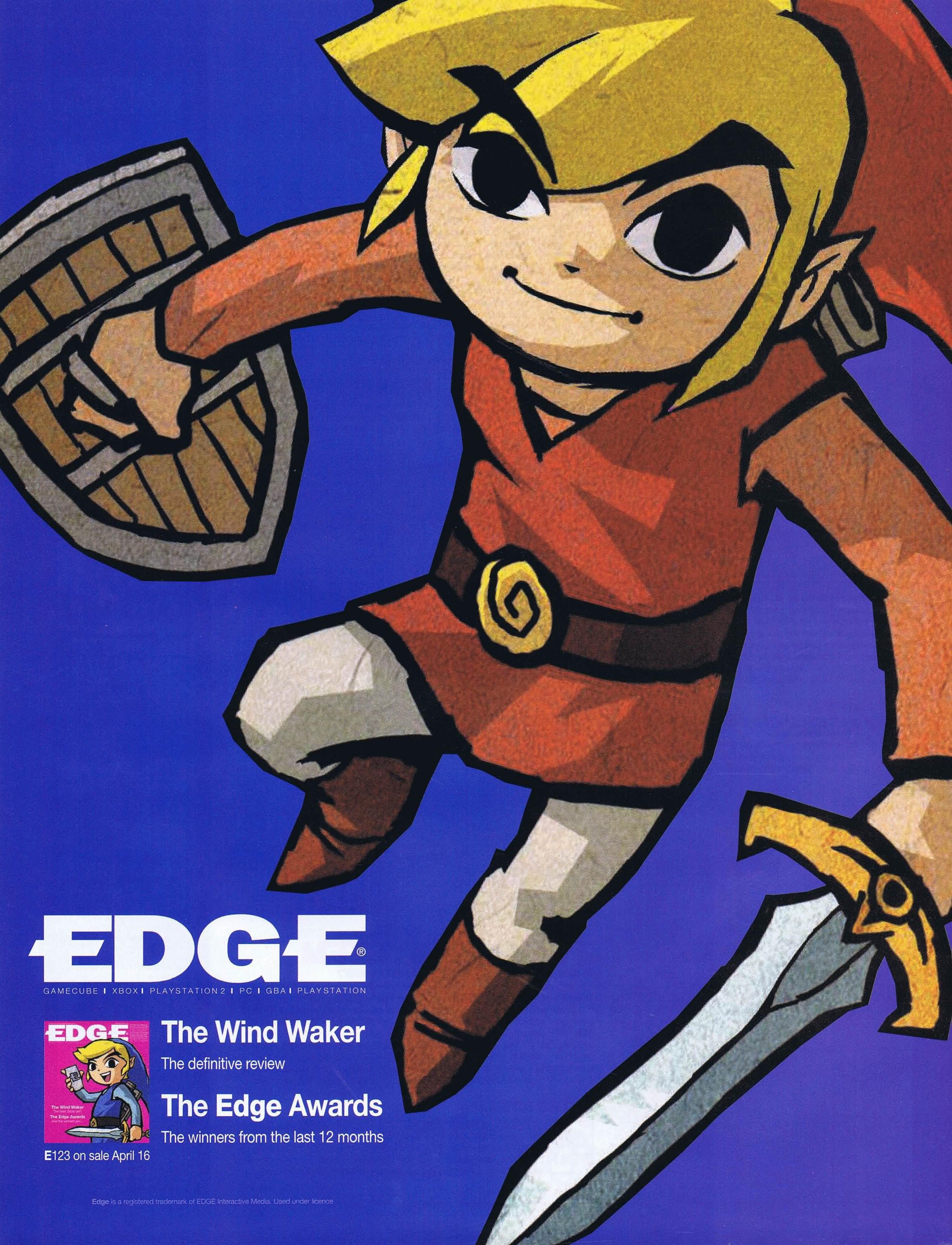
WILLIAMS F1 RACING WHEEL

JOYTECH ● £44.99
Amazing. Not too pricey and leagues ahead of the competition. This little baby actually makes driving games even more fun than before. An essential purchase.



AFTER-BURNER

TRITON LABS ● £35
Most GBA lights don't require sawing, gluing and soldering to install, but once fitted there's no better lighting alternative to this.


EDGE®
GAMECUBE | XBOX | PLAYSTATION 2 | PC | GBA | PLAYSTATION
EDGE
The Wind Waker
The definitive review
The Edge Awards
The winners from the last 12 months
E123 on sale April 16
Edge is a registered trademark of EDGE Interactive Media. Used under licence



EXTENDED PLAY





BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO IMPORTING

Fed up of getting PAL games late? Got a bit of money to spend? Get the info right here… P84

I'M THE BEST

Are you? The best, we mean. Here's the place to prove your skill and prowess. Here! P92

COMPENDIUM

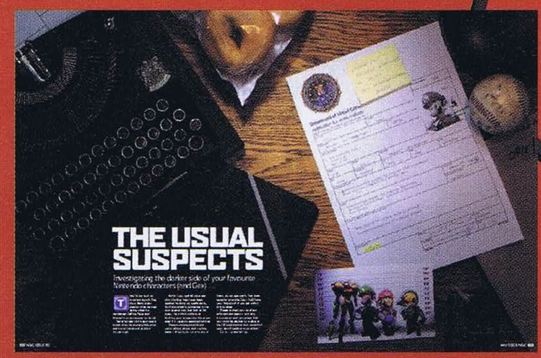
Rachel Ryan tells us all about common phrases in Japanese, plus the evolution of superheroes… P106

PLUS!

TIPS EXTRA

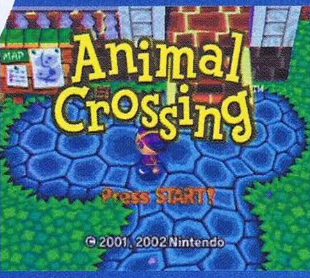
All the tips that are fit to print in a family magazine. If this weren't a family magazine, who knows what we'd print? We're crazy, see. Crazy! P88

CONTENTS









△ Don't you wish this screen was showing on your Cube right now?



△ You don't need to understand the instructions to play this one.



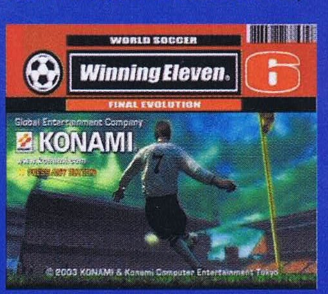
THE BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO IMPORT GAMING



Fed up with Nintendo's better-late-than-never UK release policy? Here's how to break the curse of the PAL gamer…



The gaming world is divided into European, US and Japanese regions. And, broadly speaking, the US and Japan get stuff several months before we do, and sometimes they get stuff that will *never* be released in Europe.



△ The best football game ever. Get online and order a copy right away.

There are three reasons for this. For starters, simultaneous global marketing campaigns are too expensive for all but the very biggest titles, so it's more effective to limit, or stagger, the releases. Number two, it can take ages to translate the text in a game, particularly when most European titles have to cater for several different languages. And thirdly, the TV system is totally different over here.

American and Japanese TVs use the NTSC (National Television System Committee) standard, which displays images at 60Hz – ie, the picture is updated 60 times per second. European TVs use a

FREELOADER

SAVING GAMES

If you only want to play US and UK games on your PAL machine, using a memory card won't be a problem. Depending on the games used, both formats can usually be saved to the same card. You might not always be able to see the saves on the memory card management screen, but as long as you don't delete them, they'll be safe.

However, if you want to play Japanese titles, many will refuse to save on a card that already contains US or UK data. Some will save on a blank card, but a select few will ask if you want to format the memory card to set it to the Japanese region. Unfortunately a UK or US Gamecube can't actually do this – they will just wipe the card. Every time you load the game, it will ask you to format the memory card, and you'll never be able to save.

The only way to get around this is to format the memory card on a Japanese or converted US machine, and then use it exclusively for Japanese saves. And, if you're using Freeloader with a Japanese Gamecube, you'll have the same problem in reverse, when trying to save US or UK games.

To minimise the risk of losing your data, you should get separate memory cards for each region, including a genuine Japanese card or one reformatted on a Japanese console. That's what we do here anyway, and the only time we've lost data was when somebody used Geraint's US card on a Japanese machine, inadvertently reformatted it, and nuked his *Metroid Prime* file.



△ **Version 1.04 – not the one you want. Take it back to the shop.**

COMPATIBILITY

Everything we've tried runs fine with a UK console and the latest version of Freeloader (1.06), apart from memory card problems with Japanese *Mr Driller* and *Doshin the Giant* – those two are the only ones we've seen that categorically refuse to save on a non-Japanese memory card.

There are actually two versions of Freeloader out there. And if you've been lumbered with the less common 1.04 version, you'll find that certain titles, including *Resident Evil Zero* and *Winning Eleven*, are not playable. A handful of other games will also require a bit of experimentation with Freeloader's different boot methods before they'll work.

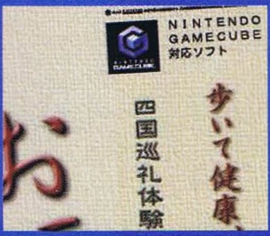
The version number is printed on the disc and will also be displayed on the Freeloader screen before you load a game. So if you discover that yours is a 1.04 version, take it back to the place you bought it, or contact Datel for a replacement.

The Freeloader contained on the Action Replay cheat disc is version 1.06, so you can be sure it will work. However, we've found some of the built-in cheat codes for Japanese games to be prone to crashing.

WHERE CAN I BUY IMPORT GAMES?







Now that you've got the setup needed to play imports, how about the games themselves? There are loads of places to buy them, but due to the cost of shipping a game halfway around the world, then adding a (hefty) chunk of profit on top, you can expect to pay more than £60 per title at specialist shops.

Online retailers tend to be considerably cheaper, and auction websites are the cheapest of the lot, but you should keep an eye open for 'hidden' costs such as high postage charges. If ordering from overseas, check to see if the customs label will be marked as merchandise or a gift. If it's a gift, you won't have to pay any more when the package hits these shores, otherwise you can expect the postman to demand a depressing amount of import tax before he'll hand over the goods.

Check the classified ads in this magazine, where you'll often find telephone numbers for import dealers, and have a look at www.ebay.co.uk if you want to try your luck in an auction or two. There are bargains out there.

different standard, called PAL (Phase Alternation by Line), which runs at a more flickery 50Hz.

Basically, colours look better and there's more clarity on a PAL TV, but moving images are smoother on an NTSC set, which is obviously a good thing as far as videogames are concerned. The two systems are completely incompatible.

When games are converted from one region to another, large portions of the code must be reworked to take into account the 50/60Hz difference. If it's done well, it's hard to tell them apart. If it's done badly, there are sometimes black borders at the top and bottom of the PAL screen, and the game runs noticeably slower.

"IF YOU'RE A PURIST, THEN PRESUMABLY YOU'LL WANT TO PLAY GAMES AT THE SPEED THEIR CREATORS INTENDED"

WHY IMPORT?

If you're a purist, you'll want to play games at the speed their creators intended. For example, the water effects in *Wave Race: Blue Storm* are quite obviously smoother and nicer in the US and Japanese versions, and your lap times will be that little bit quicker.

Of course, there are bragging rights to be had in finishing the import version long before your friends get hold of the inevitably



△ **Dangerously compulsive, but still not available in this country. Boo!**



△ **Saving your game can be problematic in certain titles. You'll need a Japanese-formatted memory card to be 100 per cent safe.**

DID YOU KNOW? A startling number of outstanding N64 games were never released here: *Sin & Punishment, Ogre Battle, Snowboard Kids 2, Custom Robo, Bangaio, Harvest Moon* and, erm, *Get A Love: Panda Love Unit* among them. Don't let yourself miss out this time, folks.

"Don't fancy splashing out on a second console? Get Freeloader"



Δ Of course, complicated menus can be hard work.



Δ If you want to play something like this, it's either a PS2 or a Freeloader.



Δ Learn katakana and you can make out that he's saying something about 'atorakushon' (attraction). So it must be a love story, right?



Δ One of the best things about importing football games is you don't have to put up with lame, repetitive English commentary. Understand it or not, the commentators in Winning Eleven sound like they're having a whale of a time.

STICK TO PAL GAMES?

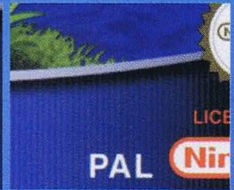


ASSEMBLED IN GERMANY

IMPORTANT: Read the instruction booklet before us

IMPORTANT: For use with PAL version of NINTENDO... Not compatible with Japanese, U.S. or Brazilian versi...





KRE03603891IS

MODEL NO.: DOL-006(EUR)

TM, ® AND THE NINTENDO G... TRADEMARKS OF NINTENDO. ©



NTSC gamers tend to get better versions of games, well in advance of the PAL release. So why bother with PAL games at all? Quite simply, it's a matter of cost and convenience. If there isn't an import shop in your area, you'll have to do a lot of phoning around various mail-order outlets in search of the best prices. If the title you want isn't in stock (most importers tend to have only the latest major releases and some older titles that didn't sell when they were new), then you can expect to have to pay big money for any special orders. Also, if you're used to trading in your old games when you buy new ones, you'll find that unfortunately, very low demand means few places accept imports as part-exchange.

belated PAL conversion. And as well as a whole world of crazy Japanese mah jong and pachinko sims, there are a handful of truly exceptional games that you could grow old, grey and decrepit whilst waiting for in this country – *Winning Eleven* and *Animal Crossing* being the biggest examples.



Δ Maybe the classy humour is the reason for its non-appearance here.

SO HOW DO I PLAY IMPORT GAMES?

The first thing you need is a TV that can handle an NTSC picture. Virtually every decent set can do this, and it's really easy to check if yours does.

Using the composite connector that came with the Gamecube (the one with yellow, red and white plugs) or Nintendo's own RGB scart lead, load up a game that features a 60Hz mode, such as *Mario, Starfox, Smash Bros, Eternal Darkness, Resident Evil, Rogue Leader* and others. You may have to hold the B-button while loading the game to access the 60Hz option.

Switch it into 60Hz, which is essentially turning it into the US version of the game, and if the picture is still okay, your TV is up to the job. If not, or you're using an old set that doesn't have scart or composite sockets, then you're sadly out of luck.

> "THERE ARE A HANDFUL OF TRULY EXCEPTIONAL GAMES THAT YOU COULD GROW OLD WAITING FOR OVER HERE..."

Next, you need a Gamecube that can play NTSC games. A US or Japanese one is best, as it can easily be modified to switch between the two NTSC regions, and will avoid some memory card hassles in a couple of games.

Alternatively, if you don't fancy splashing out on a second console (and who does?), get hold of Freeloader, a disc which costs around £20 and lets you play anything you want, from any region, on any Gamecube. Have a look at the box at the top of the previous page for further info, or check out our Freeloader review in last month's issue.



THE TIPS YOU NEED FOR THE GAMES YOU'RE PLAYING...

TIPS EXTRA



METROID PRIME

BEGINNING OF THE END

There are three different ending sequences to gawp at in *Metroid Prime*, but the one you see depends on how well you've actually played the game. To see them all, you'll need to complete the game with the following ratings…

74% or less Standard first ending
75% to 99% Ending two
100% The super-spectacular third ending

BUT IS IT ART?

There are four *Metroid* art galleries to unlock. To view them you'll need to meet the following criteria:

Scan 50% of the logs Gallery one
Scan 100% of the logs Gallery two
Beat Hard mode Gallery three
Collect all the items Gallery four

HARD TO THE CORE

Once you've completed the game, you'll be able to play in Hard mode, where the enemies are a lot more powerful.

SUPER MONKEY BALL 2

ZIP-A-DEE-DOO-DAH

When you're faced with a level which contains a fast-forward switch, there is always, but always, a play switch hidden away in there somewhere, too. Hit this and you'll slow everything down for an easier passage through the obstacles.

GIFT SHOP MADNESS

Once you've accumulated enough play points to have unlocked all the minigames, you'll be able to buy the following:

Extra monkey lives 500 play points
One of 12 movies 1000 play points
Staff Credits game 1000 play points

FIREBLADE

MINIGAMES

You can unlock four bonus minigames by completing the following tasks:

Sniper Rifle game Complete Campaign 1
EMP Cannon range Complete Campaign 2
Cow-Bounce game Complete Campaign 3
Assassination game Complete – yep, you guess it – Campaign 4

MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE

FATAL BLOWS

What's a *Mortal Kombat* game without fatalities? Nothing. So to help you get your daily gore fix, here's some to get you started (Note: Back is as in the direction back, not as in B – that refers to the button B, so don't get them confused):

Bo Rai Cho's Belly-Flop Back, Back, Back, D, X
Johnny Cage's Brain-Ripper Back, F, F, D, Y
Kano's Open-Heart Surgery F, U, U, D, B
Kenshi's Telekenetic Crush F, Back, F, D, A
Kung Lao's Morning-After Splitting Headache D, U, Back, A
Li Mei's Super Crush-Kick F, F, D, F, X
Mavado's Kick-Thrust Back, Back, U, U, B
Quan Chi's Neck-Stretcher Back, Back, F, Back, A
Scorpion's Spear-Head Back, Back, D, Back, X
Shang Tsung's Soul Steal U, D, U, D, Y
Sonya Blade's Kiss Of Death Back, F, F, D, Y
Sub-Zero's Skeleton Rip Back, F, F, D, A
Cyrax's Claw Smasher F, F, U, Y
Drahmin's Iron Bash Back, F, F, D, A
Frost's Ice Shatter F, Back, U, D, B
Hsu Hao's Laser Slicer F, Back, D, D, Y
Jax's Head Stomp D, F, F, D, Y
Kitana's Kiss of Doom D, U, F, F, Y
Nitara's Blood Thirst U, U, F, B
Raiden's Electrocution Back, F, F, F, A
Reptile's Acidic Shower U, U, U, F, A

NGC READER KNOWLEDGE!

By hitting the Z-button at any time during a game, you can toggle a chain counter (the thing which appears beneath the chain status box) in rock-hard shoot-'em-up Ikaruga.
Liam Fowkes, West Ealing

NHL 2003

PUCKING GREAT

For a couple of easy ways to score goals, try the following tactics. First, get yourself just inside the offensive zone (indicated by the blue line) and hold down Deflection while you shoot. This should see one of your butch team-mates skate over in front of the net and smack the puck in.

Failing that, skate into the ol' offensive zone with a player possessing high Deke stats, and press Down and Auto Deke. You'll now score around 95 per cent of the time. Finally, get hold of a big shooter and smack a slapshot from just between the hash marks. Aim for the top corner and a goal shall be yours at least nine times out of ten.

VERY GLASSY

To smash an opponent through the glass perimeter, it's best to get a big hitter and then smack the Y-button just as the opposition player is skating up to the glass.

NHL HITZ 20-03

STADIA

You can unlock four quirky bonus stadiums to skate around in by doing the following:

Jungle Stadium Graduate successfully from hockey school
Egypt Stadium Win any tournament
Graveyard Stadium Collect 20 trivia points
Playroom Stadium Get 50 trivia points

TEAMS

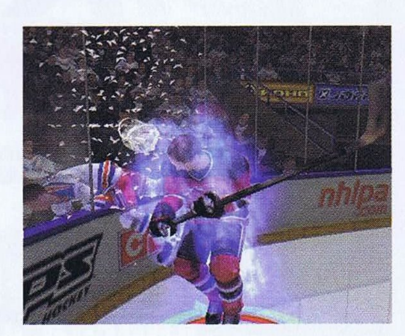
There are four hidden teams that can be made available for play by breaking the following records:

Big Babies Team Most stick checks in a game
Grey Team Most powerplay goals in a game
Herd Team Most shots in a game
Snowmen Team Most hits in a game

MORE TEAMS

Beat the following teams in Franchise mode by more than two goals and they'll be yours to play around with:

Winnipeg Lumberjacks
London Barons
Rome Gladiators
Stockholm Vikings
Zurich Blizzard
Berlin Thunder
Moscow Wolves
Tokyo Herons
Sarnia Hazard
Montego Bay Lobsters
Victoria Seagulls
Monte Carlo High Rollers
Hong Kong Silicons
Maui Kahunas
Brooklyn Brawlers
Sydney Piranhas



READERS' TOP TEN TIPS

Chick chick chick chick chickens, lay a little egg for us. Or a tip. That'll do. And if it's a good one it might even win you a game in return! Wow, huh?



1. SUPER MONKEY BALL 2

More monkeying around

On the insanely difficult Arthropod stage, go to the back of the level and up onto the left-hand side. When the timer hits 40 seconds, push forwards for victory!
Alex Price, Dunblane

2. SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE

Many men

Low on lives in Mario's little adventure out in the sunshine? Here's another easy way to stock up: Play the 6th episode of Pianta Village, clean up all the people, and they'll give you 1-ups. Now repeat. Simple, huh?
George Batheram, Rotheram

3. SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE

Chicken stock

In a team stock-battle, if you have no stock left and your friend has loads then you can just press Start and you'll be able take one of their lives! Best to ask their permission first though, or else they might smash you!
Ryan Morris, Bristol

4. ANIMAL CROSSING

Something fishy

When fishing for fish, remember that you should only press A to reel 'em in once the lure has gone completely under the water, not just when the fish start to bite it.
Janet Layton, Billericay

5. SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE

Metal Mickeys

If you're fighting against someone who has turned metallic, the best way to 'do them in' is to lure them to the edge of a stage and throw them off. Thanks to gravity, it's very hard for them to not fall to their death. (*That's rubbish - Ed*)
Ashley Dabbs, Sutton Coldfield

6. IKARUGA

Who's the boss?

Remember that if you're finding a boss too tricky to see off, you can always just dodge around until the timer runs down. You won't get any bonus points, but you will make it to the next stage.
Darren Howe, Brighton

7. ROCKY

The Balboa bounce

If you're about to be knocked out, try using the L and R shoulder buttons to dodge around the ring. Forget about landing blows on your foe, and you'll start to recover your life.
Liam Allen, Northumberland

8. TERRORISM

On the run

I find that when you get inexplicably caught up in a plot of mass terrorism, it's best not to run around shady areas late at night by yourself.
Kim Bauer, via email

9. SSX TRICKY

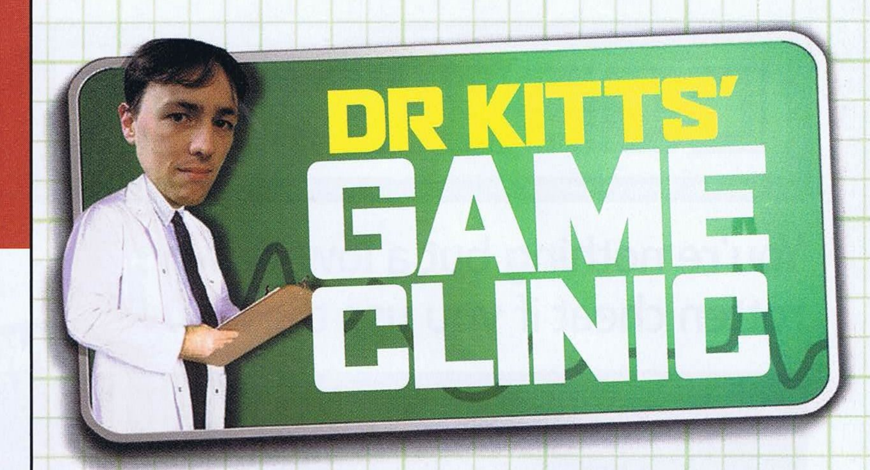
Boostin' baby

When boosting you actually go faster and last longer if you use lots of small rapid presses, and not just one big one!
Anne-Marie Jones, Bromley

10. TIMESPLITTERS 2

Fire 'em up

In multiplayer combat mode, if you chose to play as a robotic character then you'll be invincible to the harmful effects of fire.
Steven Carne, Cornwall



Dr Kitts recharges himself with the defibrilator and gets to work.

Dr Kitts,
I am stuck like a rock on an area of *Luigi's Mansion*. I go through a hallway and end up in the observatory, but I have no idea what to do next. It looks like a dead end.
Matthew Costello, Liverpool

Dr Kitts has his computer taken away by the local constabulary…
Approach the telescopic device and look into it with the magical A-button. This will result in a small opening appearing ahead of you, leading out into the night's sky, so trot over there. Some simply spiffing shooting stars will now start to fall down, so suck one up with your trusty old machine and shoot it at the moon. A path will now form which is just right for astral travelling to Mario's star!

Dr Kitts,
I read the reviews of *Metroid Prime* and knew I had to get it right away. But I've got stuck pretty early on. I'm in the Watery Hall and I can't seem to open the door. What do I need to do?
James McInernay, Northampton

Dr Kitts certifies Frankie Fraser mad.
You need to scan four hidden runes. The first is found just to the left of the entrance, the second is on the bottom floor (it's under the Blast Caps), and the third is directly below the door. As for the last one? You'll need to skip over the nearby platforms to reach it – just follow where they take you. Once you're through, you'll get your charge shot back.

Dr Kitts,
I've just started to play *Zelda: A Link To The Past* on the GBA, and I'm stuck already. I was making my way up a mountain when I stepped into a portal thing and now I'm trapped in a brown-looking world. I also seem to have turned into a rabbit. What the hell is going on?
Martin Ross, via email

Dr Kitts dons his disposable Donald Rumsfeld mask and cape…
What you have experienced is a trip to the Dark Side. And until you rescue a certain artifact from atop the mountain, you won't be able to take your proper form in this world. Hop along and make your way back to the circle of flowers, stand in the middle and then use that pretty magical mirror you have. You'll now be whisked back to the normal world in a jiffy.





You're nothing but a low-down rotten cheat if you use these…

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4

The king of the skate sim has always packed his games full of hidden little extras. For number four, there's a whole host of ready-made skaters just waiting to be opened up. Some are real-life pro-skaters, and some are just plain weird, but all of them merely require you to enter their name into the create-a-skater section:

Aaron Skillman
Adam Lippman
Andrew Skates
Andy Marchal
Angus
Atiba Jefferson
Ben Scott Pye
Big Tex
Brian Jennings
Captain Liberty
Chauwa Steel
Chris Peacock
ConMan
Danaconda
Dave Stohl
DDT
DeadEndRoad
Fakes The Clown
Fritz
Gary Jesdanun
grjost
Henry Ji
Jason Uyeda
Jim Jagger
Joe Favazza
John Rosser
Jow
Kenzo
Kevin Mulhall
Kraken
Lindsey Hayes
Lisa G Davies
Little Man
Marilena Rixfor
Mat Hoffman
Matt Mcpherson
Maya's Daddy
Meek West
Mike Day
Mike Lashever
Mike Ward
Mr. Brad
Nolan Nelson
Parking Guy
Peasus
Pete Day
Pooper
Rick Thorne
Sik
Stacey D
Stacey Ytuarte
Stealing Is Bad
Team Chicken
Ted Barber
Todd Wahoske
Top Bloke
Wardcore
Zac ZiG Drake

Alternatively, go to the cheat option screen and enter Watch_Me_Xplode (but be sure to include the capital letters and underscores). This will now open up all of the characters, cheats and movies hidden in the game.

NGC READER KNOWLEDGE!

I was messing around on the menu screens in Barbarian and found that if you use the R-button to select your character then you'll go out and fight in a different costume.
Jonas Stone, Norfolk

VIRTUA STRIKER 3 V 2002

Completing the Road To The International Cup enables you to edit your players and add hats and glasses. But for even more fun, change their names to the following:

- **CAT** Your player now has a cat face
- **SANTACLAUS** Your player now has the visage of jolly old Saint Nick

AGGRESSIVE INLINE

To obtain some super-switch advanced spinning skills in this urban skate sim, go to the cheat screen and enter Left, Left, Left, Left, Right, Right, Right, Right, Left, Right, Left, Right, Up.

DISNEY SPORTS FOOTBALL

To get unlimited magic, go to the title screen and enter Y five times, then B, A and Y. You'll hear a sound to confirm that the code has been entered correctly, and now any pair of magic shoes you pick up will give you unlimited twinkle toes.

DEAD TO RIGHTS

If actually getting to 'be' rogue cop and amateur Gareth Gates lookalike Jack Slate wasn't enough, there are also a whole host of cheats knocking around for this bullet-time based shoot and adventure-'em-up. Go to the New Game screen, hold down L and R, and enter these doozies:

- **Up, Left, Down, Right, X** 10,000 bullets
- **B, B, X, X, Right** All disarms
- **Right, X, X, X, B** Boomstick mode
- **Up, Up, Up, B, Down** unlimited bulletproof armour
- **Y, X, Up, Up, Up** Chow Yun Jack mode (gives you double guns)
- **Left, Right, Left, X, B** Gimme Some Sugar, Baby mode (unlimited adrenaline)
- **Y, B, Left, Left, X** Hard Boiled mode (makes the game a lot harder)
- **Y, Y, Up, Up, Y** Jack Off mode (turns big boy Jack invisible)
- **Down, Left, Down, Y, Down** Lazy mode
- **Down, X, Left, Left, Left** One-Hit Wonder mode
- **Y, X, X, X, Left** One-Shot Kill mode (stronger punches, kicks and judo chops)
- **Up, Up, Down, Down, Up** Precursor mode
- **B, B, B, Down, Right** Sharpshooter mode
- **B, Y, Left, Up, Right** Super Cop mode (unlimited health)
- **B, B, X, X, Right** Time To Pay mode
- **B, Y, X, Y, B** Up Close And Personal mode (unlimited health for human shields)
- **X, B, Y, X, Down** Woof mode (unlimited Shadow gauge)
- **B, Left, Y, Up, Down** Wussy mode (enemies have very bad aim)



NGC YOUR TOP TIPS

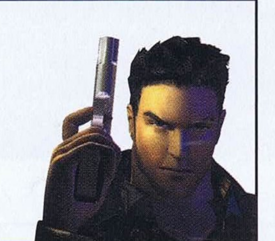
Found an interesting cheat, tip, secret or quirky thing in one of your games? Then send it into us immediately! Each month we'll stick the best into our Readers' Tips section. In return, if your tip is the number one readers' tip, we'll send you a game. Sound good? Then do it. Do it NOW!

YOUR TOP TIPS Share the knowledge and bag yourself a prize…

HERE'S MY TOP TIP…

IT'S FOR

AND THIS IS HOW IT WORKS



Name ....

....

Address ....

....

....

.... **Postcode** ....

Send to:
TIPS EXTRA, **NGC**, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW or email ngc@futurenet.co.uk

If you don't want to cut up your magazine, send a photocopy instead, and continue on another bit of paper if you run out of room. Or just buy two copies of the mag, so that we can invest more money in **NGC**'s Belgian slush-fund.



FLABBY, STUPID NUMBERS FED TO THE ITB GLUE FACTORY… BUT WILL THEY BECOME ARALDITE OR WALLPAPER PASTE?

I'M THE BEST

He awakes! Awakes into a strange new land where everything is 20mm slimmer than it should be. Characters stalk the landscape like Panavision cowboys, letters teeter in columns too thin to support their serifs, and widows scuttle hither and thither, an infestation of word-crabs on a paper beach – solitary, friendless. Surveying this terrible landscape of printing jargon, Geary sighs deeply. There once was a time when you could squeeze great words like Antidisestablishmentarianism into the red column no-one reads in I'm The Best without any bother. Not any more, though. It were all fields here once…

1

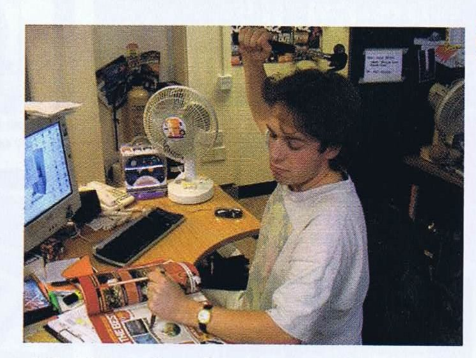

I'M THE BEST

Think you're a bit special at a game? If you can compete with this lot, send in the evidence and claim your place in the chart.

How it all works…

SUPER MARIO 64 | MARIO KART | WAVE RACE | STARFOX

△ The first ITB (May 1887), with challenges for *Mrs Beeton's Gusset Sew* and *The Complete Speeches of Benjamin Disraeli.*


△ But what wonders will await in the new, improved I'm the Best? Well, that's your job. We're off down the pub.

ALL CHANGE!


As you'll probably have noticed, this month's copy of **NGC** is strangely different. Strange. Different. Well, the reason is that, after a spate of near-fatal disasters in local village post offices, we've shaved a few millimetres off the edge so that punier shelves can stock our now less-massive magazine, and even punier hands can hold it. Still, it's what you do with it that counts. Yeah?

Anyway, while Jud was redesigning the gigantic brass plates of the enormous (and highly dangerous) 1902 Isambard Kingdom Brunel-designed steam-driven printing engine we use to make the magazine with, we also thought we'd take the opportunity to do some tinkering over the next few months while the bonnet was open, so to speak. So, as the sound of constant hammering, roaring furnaces and occasional gunfire emanating from the basement interrupts our thought patterns, we'd like you to let us know how we can improve I'm The Best. We've got plenty of ideas, but these are your leagues, and we your humble civil servants – pray, tell us how we should be running them. Should we keep tables going indefinitely, or cull less active ones? What games should we be concentrating on? Should we attempt to meld them with some kind of trans-dimensional interweb-forum based jiggery-pokery? Should they take their current form? Should they even be leagues? Whatever – we want your best, most trailblazing, epoch-defining brain-patterns on the subject NOW! Send 'em to: I'm The Best Ideas Mill, **NGC, 30 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 2BW.**

WANT MORE FROM ITB? SEND IN YOUR THINKS!

2 HOW TO PROVE YOUR ACHIEVEMENT

When sending us evidence of your gaming achievements, it's useful to follow these steps…

PHOTOGRAPHS

If you're sending us evidence of the photographic variety:

1. Turn off the camera's flash (or cover it up) to prevent it from reflecting off the screen.
2. Draw the curtains to eradicate sunlight.
3. Use a fast film (200 or 400 ASA).
4. If you're using a digicam then use a slower shutter speed.
5. Point at the screen and click away.

PLEASE NOTE: In the past we've had experience of certain scamps 'fiddling' with their photographic evidence, so this time round we're being extra-specially (is that right?) careful. We would, in fact, welcome video evidence over photographic evidence. If, however, you can only send photos, be warned: any doubts over the legality of your entry will lead to instant disqualification, and jeering.

VIDEO

If you're going to be sending us the evidence that comes on a tape, follow these instructions carefully:

1. Plug the TV lead from the Gamecube into the Signal In socket of your video.
2. Connect the Signal Out socket on your video to your TV.
3. Find a spare channel on the video and search for the signal.
4. After completing and recording the challenge, rewind the tape and send it in.

NGC YOUR BEST PERFORMANCE

3 HERE'S MY BEST PERFORMANCE…

LUIGI'S MANSION
Total number of Gs……
Time taken to beat final boss……

SONIC 2
Juggernaut Level number of rings……
Escape from the Military Base best time……

ROGUE LEADER
Battle of Endor kills……
Death Star Attack accuracy……
Star Destroyer fastest time……

TONY HAWK'S 3
The Foundry highest score……
Canada highest trick combo……
Rio highest score……

WAVE RACE
Aspen Lake best race time……
Lost Temple Lagoon stunt score……
Southern Island lap time……

TIMESPLITTERS 2
Highest score in Fight Off the Living Dead……
Best time in Pane in the Neck……
Best time in Escape from Neo Tokyo……

MARIO SUNSHINE
Best time on Il Piantissimo's Sand Sprint……
Best time on Il Piantissimo's Crazy Climb……

SUPER SMASH BROS
Highest score in Home Run……
Highest juggle combo……
Quickest time in 100-man melee……

SUPER MONKEY BALL
Fastest time on Frozen Highway……
Highest score on Monkey Target……
Fastest time on Advanced Floor 2……

Name ……

Address ……

Postcode ……

Send to:
I'M THE BEST, **NGC** Magazine,
30 Monmouth Street,
Bath, BA1 2BW

If you don't want to cut up your magazine, send a photocopy instead, and continue on another bit of paper if you run out of room. Or just write with something other than finger-paints, or your bloody stumps.

LUIGI'S MANSION



See how many Gs you can notch up at the end of the game.

1	John Dawson, Hull	186,375,000G
2	Sean Hinton, Kidderminster	185,710,000G
3	Daniel Mitchell, East Sussex	184,440,000G
4	Jamie Butters, East Sussex	184,060,000G
5	Mark Richardson, Leeds	183,575,000G



See how long it takes you to dispose of the final boss.

1	Lee Geary, Armagh	116 secs
2	Bent Eigil Sumelius, Norway	121 secs
3	Tim Wingate, Tyne & Wear	122 secs
4	Grover Mitchell, Newport	139 secs
5	Alex Gough, Rochdale	142 secs

We'll need cast-iron proof of both of these in either photographic or video form – and for the boss encounter, we'll only actually accept videos. Take a look over at the previous page for tips on how to record your triumphs.

STAR WARS: ROGUE LEADER



Most kills on Battle of Endor (you must win at least a Bronze medal).

1	Adam Goodwin, Anglesey	274
2	Kevin Ibbotson, Dublin	241
3	Dave Every, Cheshire	221
4	Joe Newman, London	191
5	David Gamble, Antrim	175



Highest accuracy on Death Star Attack (video evidence only, please).

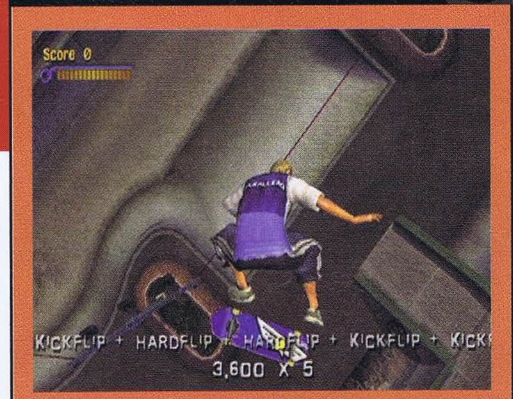
1	Kevin Ibbotson, Dublin	96%
2	Kieran Cornwell, London	93%
3	Chris Fletcher, Stockport	86%
4	Jack Gill, Northallerton	83%
5	Anthony Musson, Preston	82%

Fastest time achieved taking out the Star Destroyer in Razor Rendezvous.

1	Simon Thomas, Solihull	0:22
2	Gavin Maidment, Cheshire	0:23
3	Dave Every, Cheshire	0:24
4	Paul Bowers, Wolverhampton	0:32
5	Alan Dyer, Maidstone	0:33

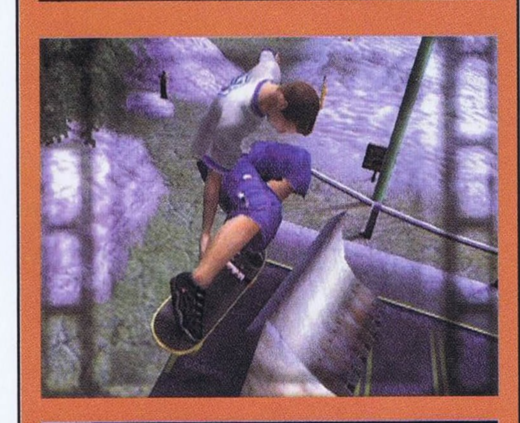
Lissen up, fools. On Death Star Attack, what we don't want to see is you shooting three TIEs with homing torpedoes for 100 per cent accuracy – that's for maggots. Know what we mean? We want to see video footage of REAL skill. Pics are fine for the other two.

TONY HAWK'S 3



Highest point score on The Foundry level.

1	Andrew Nizinskyj, Barnsley	13,228,348
2	Lee Robinson, Notts	4,489,945
3	John Copeland, Co Durham	4,203,016
4	David Peacock, Co Durham	3,886,325
5	Mickey Ieronymides, St Albans	3,255,466



Highest trick combo on the Canada level.

1	Andrew Nizinskyj, Barnsley	8,195,915
2	Lee Robinson, Notts	4,489,945
3	David Peacock, Co Durham	3,886,325
4	Gary Lord, Hull	2,173,200
5	John Copeland, Co Durham	1,879,038

Highest score on the Rio level.

1	Andrew Nizinskyj, Barnsley	12,948,744
2	Daniel Rouse, High Wycombe	7,039,117
3	Mickey Ieronymides, St Albans	4,225,882
4	David Bennett, Isle of Man	4,095,129
5	Andrew Cooper, Surrey	3,786,550

Remember, Tony Hawk's 3 is blinkin' hard – maybe even harder than Advanced Calculus – which means you'll need to put in the hours. Once you have, get us your proof of the end screen in either photographic or, preferably, videographic form. Ta very much.

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO… I'M THE BEST, NGC MAGAZINE, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW

WAVE RACE: BLUE STORM



Your best race time on Aspen Lake in Normal mode.

1	Paul Holmes, Edinburgh	0'21"144
2	Dave Every, Cheshire	1'00"890
3	John Dawson, Hull	1'01"614
4	Daniel Dunn, Boston	1'01"633
5	Frantzeskakis Dimitris, Greece	1'03"930



Your best stunt score on Lost Temple Lagoon.

1	John Dawson, Hull	35,783
2	Steven Lockwood, Bradford	35,545
3	Ben Tatlow, London	33,160
4	Jon East, Manchester	26,254
5	Frantzeskakis Dimitris, Greece	11,019

Your best lap time on Southern Island in Normal mode.

1	John Dawson, Hull	0'16"106
2	Dave Every, Cheshire	0'16"276
3	Daniel Dunn, Boston	0'16"587
4	James Stock, Norwich	0'18"248
5	Andrew Cooper, Surrey	0'18"712

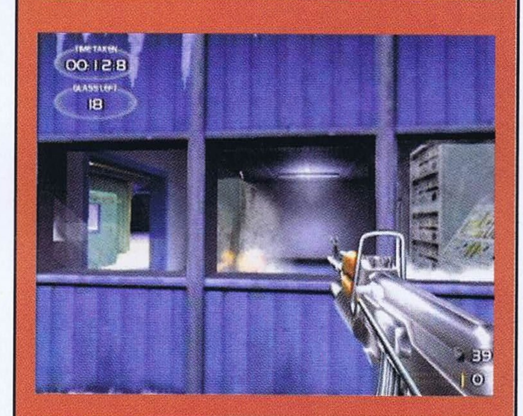
Fancy some? Again, we'll need cast-iron proof of your achievements – video is our choice medium, although we may also accept some photographic evidence, provided – of course – that it hasn't been altered or messed with in some way.

TIMESPLITTERS 2



Your highest score in the Fight Off the Living Dead challenge…

1	Paul Marke, Southampton	608,700
2	Dave Every, Cheshire	339,725
3	Gabe Harry, Hereford	296,975
4	Jonathan Cross, Manchester	281,600
5	John Dawson, Hull	225,775



Your best time in the Pane in the Neck challenge…

1	Jonathan Cross, Manchester	9.2 secs
2	Dave Every, Cheshire	8.9 secs
3	Ric Bullen, Knaresborough	9.2 secs
4	John Dawson, Hull	10.0 secs
5	Daniel Trafford, West Yorkshire	10.1 secs

Your best time in the Escape from Neo Tokyo challenge…

1	Jonathan Cross, Manchester	12.7 secs
2	Lewis Voigtländer-Ford, Mltn Keynes	16.0 secs
3	Aurelio Wood, Essex	16.7 secs
4	John Dawson, Hull	16.9 secs
5	Ric Bullen, Knaresborough	17.0 secs

The challenges in TS2 are some of the toughest around, so you'll need to keep your wits about you if you want to beat these scores, especially on the Fight Off the Living Dead challenge. A clear photo of the results screen will suffice for all three.

SONIC ADVENTURE 2



How many rings you can get at the end of the Juggernaut chase section.

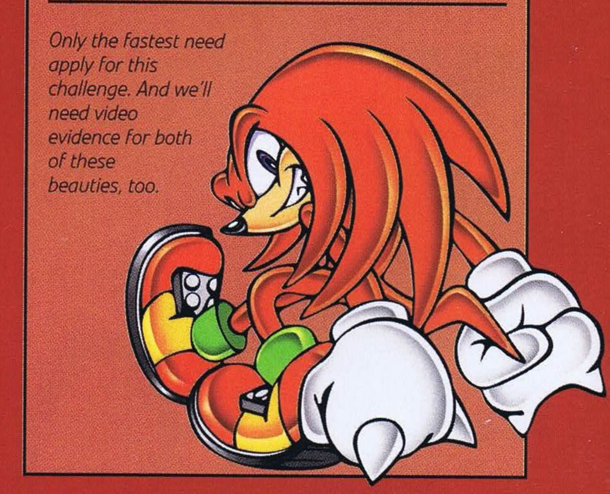
1	Jim Osborne, Staffordshire	453
2	William Thomas, Shropshire	440
3	Adam Ely, Weybridge	437
4	Tom Sherwood, Cheshire	413
5	David Smith, Bothwell	379



What time you can notch up on Escape from the Military Base.

1	David Waters, Essex	01:39:14
2	Jim Osborne, Staffordshire	01:42:27
3	Tom Sherwood, Cheshire	01:42:52
4	Barry Templeton, Kilmarnock	01:43:57
5	David Smith, Bothwell	01:46:70

Only the fastest need apply for this challenge. And we'll need video evidence for both of these beauties, too.



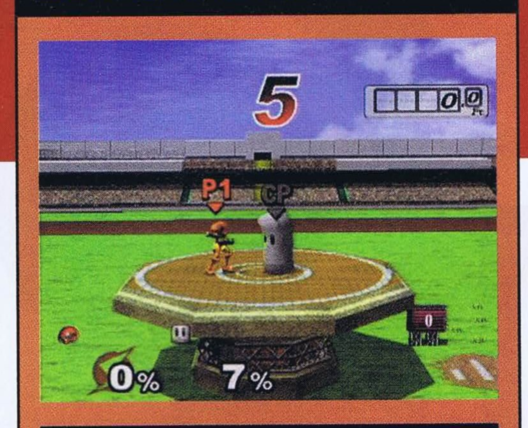


SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO… I'M THE BEST, **NGC** MAGAZINE, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW

I'M THE BEST

See them names? You ain't there, you ain't nuthin'…

SUPER SMASH BROS



How far can you hit the bag? We want to see your highest score in Home Run.

1	Ben Turner, Kent	974.3m
2	Dave Every, Cheshire	602.6m
3	John Dawson, Hull	563.5m
4	David Smith, Bothwell	523.1m
5	Dean Hailstone, Tyne & Wear	508.9m



How many juggle combo hits can you get in before your foe hits the ground?

1	John Rothwell, Wallasey	999
2	Dave Every, Cheshire	139
3	Ry Morgan, Moray	29
4	Tom Lyth, Manchester	25
5	A Fielder, Glastonbury/L Geary, Armagh	23

Your quickest time in 100-Man Melee, using Mario only.

1	Aidan McGinley, Co Donegal	02:27:40
2	Dean Hailstone, Tyne & Wear	02:29:06
3	Matthew Jenner, Croydon	02:30:95
4	Aaron Fielder, Glastonbury	02:31:62
5	Dave Every, Cheshire	02:32:73

Just as there's more than one way to skin a cat, there's more than one way to smack a bag – which is why we want videoed evidence of your attempt at the first challenge. Same goes for the juggle combo challenge – although we'll accept pics for 100-man melee.

MARIO SUNSHINE



Your best time on Il Piantissimo's Sand Sprint (Gelato Beach).

1	Aaron Fielder, Glastonbury	10:15
2	Dean Hailstone, Tyne & Wear	10:35
3	Lee Geary, Armagh	10:36
4	John Dawson, Hull	10:40
5	Sean Hinton, Kidderminster	10:50



Your best time in Il Piantissimo's Crazy Climb (Pianta Village).

1	Aaron Fielder, Glastonbury	16:80
2	Lee Geary, Armagh	16:43
3	Daniel Rouse, High Wycombe	16:80
4	Mark Williamson, Rotherham	17:87
5	Michael Newton, Welwyn Garden City	17:96

Two timed challenges from the best Mario game since the last one – videoed evidence is, as ever, preferable, but we'll accept photos as long as they clearly show the end of each challenge with your final score displayed. You heard.



SUPER MONKEY BALL



Your fastest time on the Frozen Highway stage in Monkey Race…

1	John Dawson, Hull	0:53:72
2	David Smith, Bothwell	0:54:55
3	Sean Hinton, Kidderminster	0:55:20
4	Michael Rothwell, Wallasey	0:55:71
5	Simon Mason, Bournemouth	1:27:36



Highest score on Monkey Target (with Wheel of Danger turned off).

1	Dave Every, Cheshire	8,970
2	Pavel Sikorsky, London	6,050
3	Adam Williams, Exeter	4,380
4	Will Prendergast, Berkshire	3,020
5	Simon Mason, Bournemouth	2,850

Your fastest time on Advanced Floor 2 in the Main Game (Time Remaining).

1	Sean Hinton, Kidderminster	53:08
2	Dave Every, Cheshire	54:85
3	David Smith, Bothwell	54:78
4	Michael Rothwell, Wallasey	54:73
5	John Dawson, Hull	54:56

We'll want a picture of your monkey crossing the finish line for the first challenge, but a simple picture of the results screen will suffice for the other two. And don't forget to turn the Wheel of Danger off for the second challenge – there's really no point. At all.

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO… I'M THE BEST, NGC MAGAZINE, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW



30 MONMOUTH STREET/BATH/BA1 2BW

MAILBOX

EMAIL US!

Got something to say? Run out of stamps? Guards won't let you near a pen? Then log on to the interweb and 'get' us 'at'…

ngc@futurenet.co.uk

…right now! And please include your *name and address.* Oh, go on. Please.



STAR LETTER

WIN YOURSELF A BRAND NEW GAMECUBE GAME!

'Still-warm corpse'

I just finished an amazingly cool *TimeSplitters 2* Leech match in Streets – me and five Chassisbots, taking on five other Chassisbots, which of course we won. But I was both shocked and appalled when I 'finished' the last bot and the game did that thing where you can't move to see one of my team-mates come running in and giving him 'afters' with double shotguns! After I'd climbed down from the wardrobe I began to see the sheer genius behind this AI manoeuvre – after all, everyone else does it (well, I do) and this does make for even more realistic multiplayer against bots with intelligence and sheer unpredictability. I'll only start worrying if a whole group of them surround my still-warm corpse and take turns to kick my body into the gutter, whereupon one runs me over with a snowplough, my entrails flailing wildly out the back. One for *TS3*, hopefully.
Nat Barker, via email

Fantastic! If anyone has any other ideas for semi-realistic 'surprise' features in games – such as streakers in sports sims, or people flipping the finger out of car windows in racing games – send them to the usual address. Ed



△ **For the love of Yamauchi, give this man a holiday. And a hands-on role with *Mario 128*.**

'Quantity over quality'

While browsing the forums at gamesradar.com I came across a discussion about *Super Mario Sunshine* and how it compared with *Super Mario 64*. In response I decided to dig up my copy of the game and started playing. I'd only played for a couple of minutes when I realised that every other game I've played on the Gamecube pales in comparison. Why is this? Because Sony forced Nintendo to ditch their preferred medium (cartridges) and choose a 'quantity over quality' policy. Instead of concentrating on one game, Miyamoto seems to be developing multiple games at once, something that isn't improving the quality of the games produced. Sure, we seem to be getting our Nintendo games quicker – there's only about six months between *Mario* and *Zelda* – but they don't seem to be quite as good as their N64 predecessors. Don't get me wrong, I still think the GC is the best console by far – just look at the uninspired crap on other consoles – but I'm disappointed that because of the competition from Sony and others I'll never play a game as good as *Mario 64* and *Zelda OOT* again.
Auke Rijpma, Holland

But compare* Sunshine *with any platform game other than* SM64*, or* Wind Waker *with any action RPG since* Ocarina*. These are still world-class games that make almost everything else out there look second rate, even if they don't have the revolutionary aspect of the N64 titles. With Nintendo more prepared than ever to farm out franchise sequels to less experienced teams and third parties, the next few years could see more genuine innovation from the company's star performers. Ed

Bonus Letters

I'm sure it would surprise some of your ignorant readers that a hell of a lot of work goes into the production of the mag.
Gary Roberts, via email
It's all done with monkeys and mirrors. Ed

Is it possible that *Conker's Bad Fur Day 2* will become multi-format? Please say yes!
Edward Sperring, via email
No. Ed

Games are a lot harder to make than you would think. To draw games with better graphics, the picture has to be magnified A LOT.
Big Bowser, via email
So that's how they do it. Ed

The absolute rock bottom was *Mickey's Speedway USA*.
Tim Amptmeijer, The Netherlands
You're spot-on there. Ed

Clenching his buttocks like some deranged cartoon loony.
Will Rushworth, Newcastle
Just like the 11am toilet rush in the NGC office. Ed

'Obvious thing'

I understand Nintendo's delays in that they have to switch from NSTC to PAL, but I know most of the time is taken translating games into European languages. So I don't understand why games are not more region-specific (one for the UK, one for Germany) instead of being bunched together and taking ten times as long to arrive in this country. Surely this would mean more compatibility, less importing and happier gamers worldwide? Surely this is the obvious thing to do? Why not?
David Press, via email

If only… But knowing the way these things work, it would take even longer if there were more regions. Nintendo would have to be much more precise in researching demand and allocating units to each country since they couldn't just order, say, 500,000 to divide between the whole of Europe as needed. And gamers in Germany would rightly complain if there was a perfectly workable PAL version available just an hour's plane journey away while they have to wait six months for a translation. Ed

'Grey, red and black'

I think that people that want to play 'mature' games really just want a black-and-white game. Take the *Resident Evil* series, for instance. The only main colours used in it are grey, red and black, whereas *Super Mario Sunshine* uses a wide variety of colours, and yet is somehow labelled as 'immature', regardless of the gameplay, lifespan and any other good points. The same happened for others such as *Banjo-Kazooie* and *Conker's Bad Fur Day* (even though they are going to be on the Xbox). They are not just calling Nintendo's games immature, because a lot



HONOURABLE MENTIONS
Thanks to everyone else who wrote, and emailed this month.

Andy Parsons, via email; Andy Pinnington, Cambridge; Alun MacRae, via email; Steve Ward, via email; Tim Murray, via email; Matt Gamble, via email; Sam Charters; via email; Peter Lowe, via email; Thomas Partridge, Wakefield; David-Scott Hockley, via email; Neil Killilea; via email; Ryan Hogan, Hertfordshire; Guy Hay, via email; Dave Hill, via email; Tom Enderby, via email; Greg Clarke, Chigwell; David and Joshua Meacham, via email; Gerard Dickson, via email; James Cussen, via email; Michael Shelley, Runcorn; Carl Wilkins, Newcastle; Joseph Rabbitt, via email; Johnathon Harkness, Northern Ireland; Danny

of platform games (if not most of them) are really colourful as well.
Jamie Briggs, via email

***Maybe this is the way forward for Mario. A bit like our* Super Mafia Sunshine *pic in last month's EndGC.* Ed**

'There are many'

After reading your scoop on *Enter the Matrix* in issue 78 I thought to myself that this is just going to be another huge let-down. Let's face it, movies and games don't mix. *The Final Fantasy* movie, anyone? Or perhaps a quick blast on *Minority Report*? Even though it's just another chapter of *The Matrix* closely tied in with the films doesn't mean its going to be as good, or as successful, as the movies. I admit, it sounds good and judging by the screenshots it already looks like a good game. But just look at the let-downs in the past. *Turok Evolution, Starfox Adventures* and *Die Hard Vendetta*. All were over-hyped, even though they had the potential to be good games – actually, *Die Hard* isn't that bad. Anyway, don't get too excited about it. I'm sure it'll be another disappointment, of which there are many at the moment.
Alex Hancock, Great Malvern.

***Ladies and gentlemen, we have a new contender for the 2003 Optimist of the Year award! Movies have mixed pretty well with games from time to time –* GoldenEye *and* Alien Resurrection *to name but two. And then there's the likes of, erm, oh…* Ed**



Bonus Letters

What are 'wind claws' anyway?
Matthew Lewis, via email
***They're what you use for climbing the breeze.* Ed**

Last but not least, meet up with a little elf boy and eat tea with deku spoons.
Paolo Verdolini, via email
***Oh. My. God.* Ed**

What I have recently realised is the fact that video games weren't supposed to be realistic.
Philip, via email
***What, not even Pikmin?* Ed**

The best parent for a child is its mother, with the child being games and the mother being Nintendo.
Will Erskine, Denmead
***That's beautiful, man. Beautiful.* Ed**

As I picked up Mario Party 4 I was shouted at by this 16-to-19-year-old guy who called me a "NINTENDO BUNNY".
Daniel Gain, Seaton
***You've just lived Geraint's dream.* Ed**

'Out of a job'

Something has just shocked me! If Nintendo should make the Gamecube their last console (perish the thought) and start only to produce games for Sony, would this mean that you guys are out of a job? Or would you defect and start writing for PlayStation mags? Would this spell the end for **NGC**?
Jamie Briggs, via email

***That's not going to happen. But if it did then, under the terms of our contracts, we'd all be melted down and turned into glue for binding the spines of PS2 tips books.* Ed**

'Make her pregnant'

I'm a big fan of Enjiki in your mag, but I've come up with some things you could do to improve the character.

1. Put a bit of weight on her, make her belly a bit rounder, make her belly button stick out.
2. In the summer issues, get her to wear bikinis.
3. Make her pregnant. Some people look sexy when pregnant, eg, Jordan.
4. Different outfits every issue and a belly button piercing would look nice.

I did some outfit designs on another bit of paper.
Anon, via snail mail

***While this is clearly disturbing, it's nowhere near as wrong as the naked Pornjiki picture sent in by another anonymous reader. Or, indeed, the tastefully customised picture of Manjiki that hangs on the wall above Jud's desk. You really don't want to know.* Ed**

'Fairly poor'

Reading through issue 78 I found your Readers' Top Ten Tips section fairly poor. Okay, so most of the tips were probably useful – ie, I don't have those games and have no idea – however *Sunshine* and *Rogue Leader* were the kind of tips I'd expect a four-year-old to figure out. If you're any kind of Mazza fan you'll obviously like to explore the surroundings and you'll find that particular one-up so fast you won't know what happened. And it only takes a slight bit of common sense to realise you can brake in *Rogue Leader*. Then I decided to take a quick peek through the previous issue and see if this was a common occurrence and, lo and behold, there were five useless tips. The *Resi* tip was in one of your own tips books! *Timesplitters 2* tip? Hit them with your fists? Just use a gun and not only do you get the 100 points for the head but also 75 for any limbs you hit as well. *Smash Bros*? Well done! You figured out how to look around on the trophy screen! I would like to know if Adam Humphreys is partially sighted – those barrels are there all the time – and I distinctly remember you mentioning a while ago how to land on them without using any power-ups in one of your reviews or something.
John Booth, Freefolk

***That tips slave is so fired. But remember, it's the readers' tips page after all, and the more decent, preferably 'quirky' tips (not just cheat codes from the internet) you lot send in, the better it will be. Dazzle us with tippage!* Ed**





CORRECTION CORNER

While reading issue 78 with my nine-year-old son at bedtime he suddenly spotted an error on page 27. It clearly says 'harware' instead of hardware. On seeing he was correct, I excitedly exclaimed: "Great! Maybe you can win a prize for spotting it."
Mark Bedwell, via email

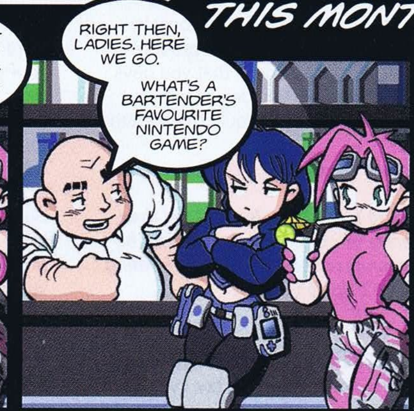
***No. No you can't. But every time somebody points out a spelling mistake like this, we're obliged to chain* NGC*'s Welsh Wonder Geraint to the railings outside, where we leave him all night until the rats gnaw at his feet and the crows peck at his buttocks. In the absence of the Queen's English, it's the only language he understands.* Ed**

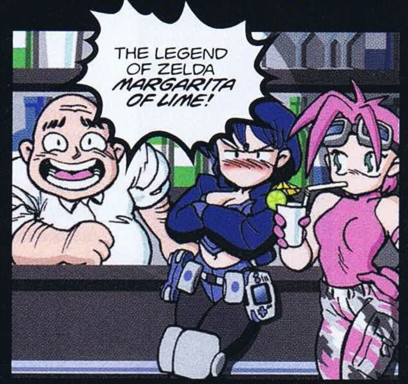
Masding, via email; Brian Fulton, via email; Gary Dougill, Coventry; Tim Swallow, Wokingham; Pam Phelps, via email; David Catena, via email; Xavier Adolphe, via email; Matt Driver, via email; Jonathan Youngs, via email; Andy Bennison, Cheadle Hulme; Jason Shaw, Sheffield; Herman Mohan, Ilford; Phil Parrott, via email; Fergus Weir, Scotland; Jack Keen, via email; Sean Hinton, Kidderminster; David Morris, Wallasey; Katie Dunstone, St Austell; Aaron Fitzgerald, Southampton; Bennet Aldous, Saltburn; Papa K D Opoku, Surrey; Sam Henly, Cardiff; April MacKinnon, Radcliffe-on-Trent; James Cullen, Haverhill; Dave Fortnam, via email; Luke Ridley, Somerset; Daniel Rudi Søvik, via email, and too many others to mention!

Grintendo!

NEW AND IMPROVED! FROM NOW ON, WE'LL BE RUNNING YOUR JOKES PAST OUR VERY OWN ENJIKI. IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT YOU MAKE HER SMILE, WE'LL SEND YOU A FREE GAME. OKAY?
THIS MONTH: IT'S RYAN HOGAN'S TURN. GOOD LUCK…





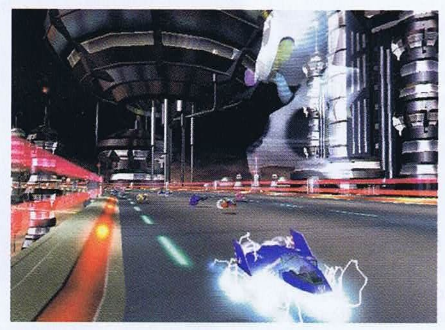




WRITE TO… GRINTENDO/MAILBOX/NGC/30 MONMOUTH STREET/BATH/BA1 2BW/OR EMAIL NGC@FUTURENET.CO.UK

'Bonus disc'

I think that what Nintendo are doing for Zelda fans on the Gamecube is brilliant! Not only do they get a brand new Zelda game, they get *Ocarina of Time* and a special add-on that was originally for the 64DD for the extra price of nothingness! Wouldn't it be great if Nintendo did similar things with some of their other potential classics on the Gamecube? For example, when they eventually release *Mario Kart* on the Gamecube they could include an unlockable port of *Super Mario Kart* from the Super Nintendo. Or with *Super Mario 128*, they could include a bonus disc with *Super Mario 64* on it. It is no secret that the Gamecube isn't selling as well as the PlayStation 2, but if enough N64 gamers and even Super Nintendo gamers had the opportunity to unlock or own the games they missed on previous consoles I'm sure they'd only jump at the chance! Nintendo have an opportunity for business here, and I hope they make good use of it.
Nathan Edgeworth, via email



△ We've had plenty of N64 and NES bonuses on Gamecube so far. What secrets will *F-Zero* hold?

***They surely will.* Metroid Prime *has the original* Metroid *built in, and* Animal Crossing *has loads of NES games. There are rumours that* F-Zero X *will be bundled with* F-Zero GC*, and after the success of the Zelda promotion in the States, we can expect to see more special edition discs in the future. Also, does anyone remember Shigsy saying that Gamecube's cheap discs would allow him to let less experienced producers cut their teeth by working on Director's Cut special editions of N64 games?* Ed**

'Hooking up'

I read in a previous issue of **NGC** that you get your screenshots by hooking up your Gamecube to your PC. What I want to know is how, because I would like to play my Gamecube using my PC screen instead of a TV.
Richard Hackett, via email

***It's actually a bit tricky with a UK console. You need a VGA convertor that will take the signal from your Gamecube and change it so that it can be displayed on a monitor, or a graphics card that handles TV or camcorder input. Unfortunately most of the affordable ones only handle S-video signals (which the UK console doesn't support) or composite video (which looks terrible). The only option is to get a US Gamecube, a Freeloader and an S-video to VGA convertor. Or just make do with your TV.* Ed**

12th
BEST EVER UK GAME SHOW

'Voids of cyberspace'

Cruising through the voids of cyberspace I somehow ended up on *Countdown's* website (don't ask). Looking through it, I found that it had been awarded the 12th Best Ever UK Game Show award, along with a strangely familiar-shaped badge for the site. It appears that whoever hands out the award has been playing *Mario Sunshine*!
Mark Johnson, via email

***That's got Vorderman written all over it. Wonder what the top 11 shows are?* Ed**

SO TELL ME THIS…

The All-Knowing Brain applies the Power of Think to your questions.

1. What exactly is the difference between second-party and third-party developers?
2. Will the Gamecube ever have something to rival *Vice City*?
3. Any sign of a *Nights* game for Gamecube?
4. Is it possible that Nintendo could make a DVD player attachment to fit on the bottom of a Gamecube?
James Hamilton, Herts

1. Third-party companies such as Konami or Capcom are independent and free to make their own games for the console of their choice. Second parties are companies that have some kind of long-term deal with a console manufacturer, such as Retro Studios or Rare.
2. Driver 3 should come pretty close.
3. Check PSO…
4. It would be expensive. Why not just buy a separate DVD player?

1. When, if ever, will the Game Eye come out for GBA?
2. Do you think it will be compatible with the GBA SP, since the cartridge goes at the bottom?
3. Do you think Nintendo will show *Mario 128* at E3?
4. Will you be making a DVD of E3 like last time? The last two DVDs were really good. Please say you will.
The reader who didn't tell us his/her name, via email

1. We expect to see more of the Game Eye camera, including a release date, at the E3 show in May.
2. The camera swivels around, so having it at the bottom (like some mobile phones) won't be a problem. Nintendo will no doubt include a GBA SP mode in the software to flip the image the right way round.
3. There's a good chance.
4. Fingers crossed!

1. I've heard some vague rumours about the new Mario game (possibly *Mario 128*?) Can you give me any information about it?
2. Is there going to be a Donkey Kong game?
3. What the hell is *Starfox Armada*?
4. How good is *Splinter Cell*? Will it be worth buying?
Jan Vantilborgh, Belgium

1. There's unlikely to be any info on that until May at the very earliest.
2. Yes.
3. It's the proper sequel to* Lylat Wars*, in development for arcade and Gamecube over at Namco in Japan.
4. Very good, especially if you are a fan of* Metal Gear *and Tom Clancy games.

Pokémon is not very popular any more. Why not start with something new?
Heather Raymond, Milford Haven

Because the recent GBA versions have sold more than four million copies in Japan. It's still a gold mine for Nintendo. Clearly very popular too.



ENTER THE MATRIX

Hold on to your hats. **NGC** has the exclusive review of the Gamecube version of the year's hottest movie licence. Prepare to be amazed...

ZELDA: WIND WAKER

The best *Zelda* yet? Read our gigantic PAL review to find out...

PLUS! *The Hulk, Zelda: Wind Waker* guide, *Pokémon Ruby* and *Sapphire* and *Hitman 2* reviewed, another stunning free gift, and much, much more...

Don't settle for second best. Get NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING

On sale Thursday 15th May



NGC SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM

INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING

YOUR DETAILS

Title____________Initials__________Surname________________________

Address____

____

Postcode ______________________Country ______________________

Tel No (inc STD)____

Email address____

Please start/extend my subscription with the next available issue at the rate ticked below:

- By Direct Debit (UK only) ■ £8.75 every 3 months for 13 issues during the next 12 months
- By cheque or credit card

■ UK £35 ■ Europe £40 ■ N. America £43 ■ Rest of world £52* *airmail

Please choose your method of payment

1. ☐ **Direct Debit** (UK only) I understand I will be paying £8.75 every 3 months.
2. ☐ **Cheque** payable to Future Publishing. Sterling cheques drawn on a UK account.
3. ☐ **Visa**
4. ☐ **Mastercard**
5. ☐ **Amex**
6. ☐ **Switch** Issue No.__________ Valid Date__________ Expires__________

Risk-free offer! You can cancel at any time and receive a full refund on any unmailed issues.

Card No. ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

Signature____ Date____________

☐ Please tick this box if you would prefer not to receive information on special promotions.

Offer ends 14/05/03 Order Code NGCP80

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay Direct Debits.

future publishing — DIRECT Debit

Future Publishing Ltd. Cary Court, Somerton, Somerset, TA11 6BR.

Originator's Identification Number

7 6 8 1 9 5

1. Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society branch

To: The Manager

______________________________ Bank/Building Society

Address____

______________________________ Postcode ______________

2. Name(s) of account holder(s)

3. Branch sort code (from the top right-hand corner of your cheque)

4. Bank or Building Society account number

5. Instruction to your Bank or Building Society

Please pay Future Publishing Direct Debits from the account detailed on this Instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with Future Publishing and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank or Building Society.

Signature(s)_______________________________ Date______________

Ref No. (Office use only)

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions for some types of account.

You may photocopy this blank form and then complete it. You cannot fax or email Direct Debit forms.

UK readers return this coupon by FREEPOST to:
NGC Magazine, Future Publishing, FREEPOST BS4900, Somerton, Somerset, TA11 6BR

Overseas readers return this coupon (postage payable) to:
NGC Magazine, Future Publishing, Cary Court, Somerton, Somerset, TA11 6TB, UK

1 We have the **BEST WRITERS,** the best sources, and the best, most in-depth reviews in the world

2 We secure the big **EXCLUSIVES** and provide you with the most exhaustive tips

3 We're the only **NINTENDO** mag you can trust – we always tell you how it is

4 And now we're giving you the chance to receive NGC for just

£8.75 EVERY 3 MONTHS

HOW TO SUBSCRIBE

Post
Complete the form on the left and post FREE in the UK to the address shown.

Telephone
+44 (0)870 444 8653

Please quote order code NGCP80. Lines are open 24 hours a day. Overseas Hotline: +44 1458 271100

Website
www.futurenet.com/promotion/pg080/27

Order code
NGCP80

Offer ends
14.05.03

THE NGC GUARANTEE...

- To deliver every issue of the new-look NGC direct to your door with a year's subscription.
- You'll get an amazing 13 issues for the price of 10!
- Risk-free guarantee – if you're not entirely happy we'll send you a full refund on all unmailed issues.
- You'll get a fantastic free gift with every issue!
- You'll never miss another issue ever. Ever ever ever!
- Free delivery every month! What do you want? Blood?

PLUS get 13 issues of NGC for the price of 10... that's just £8.75 every 3 months!

FREE! LOGIC 3 JOYPAD

WORTH £14.99 but you pay nothing!



THE USUAL SUSPECTS

Investigating the darker side of your favourite Nintendo characters (and Gex) …

They're not such an innocent bunch. That thug Mario knew exactly what he was doing when he vandalised Delfino Plaza and blamed it on some poor turtle kid.

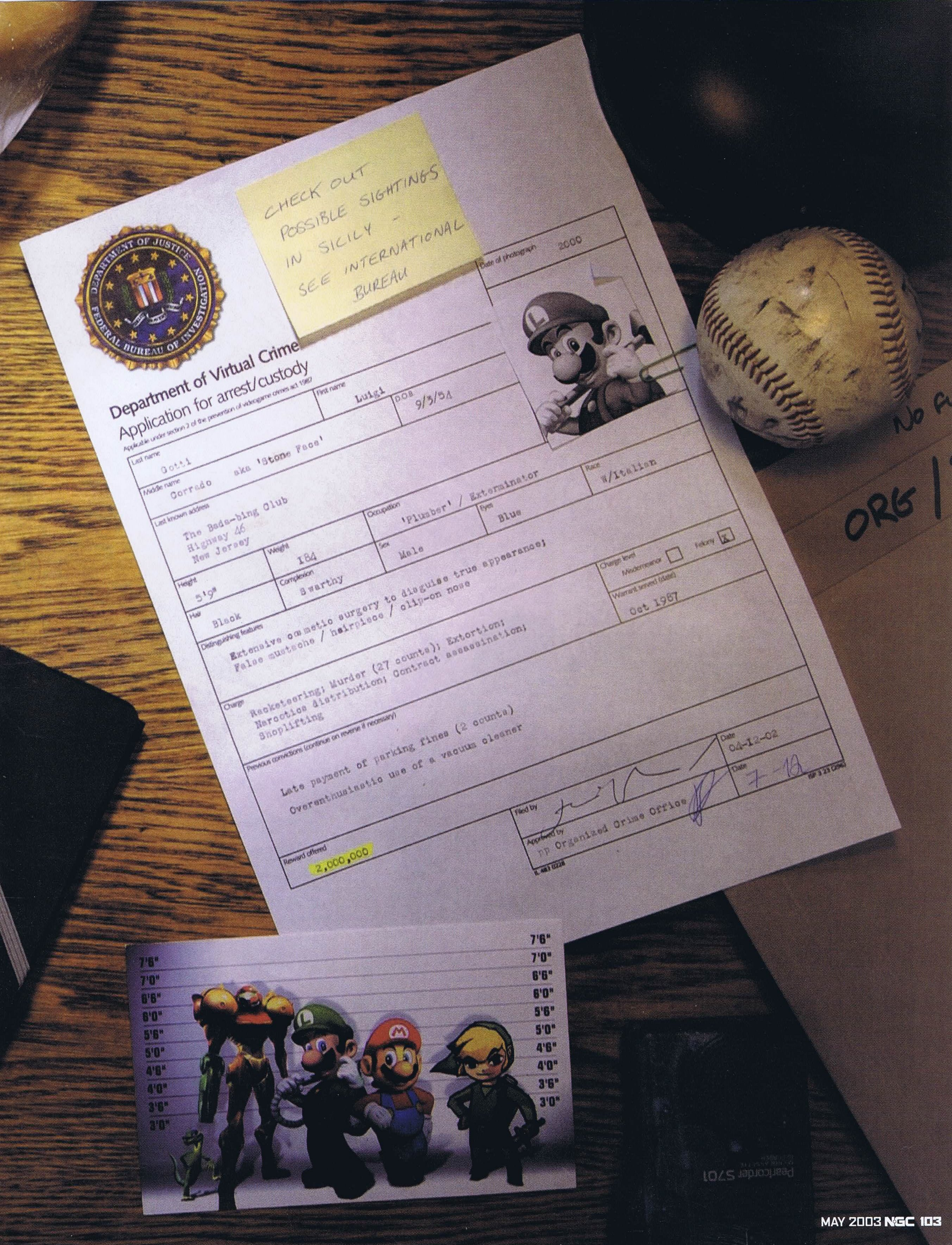
Serial burglar Link has a record longer than his stumpy little arms, and he isn't even out of short trousers yet.

As for Luigi, well let's just say this 'plumber' has never been spotted hooking up washbasins, but he's certainly connected in his own special way. Just look at his eyes – he'd think nothing of flushing your corpse into the sewer, even if it caused a serious blockage.

These are dangerous felons we're talking about, and – joking aside – should you run into any of them, do not approach. That even goes for cute little Gex – he'll have your fingers off if you get within biting range.

Please contact your local law enforcement agency with any information, and remember that you could be eligible for a slice of the FBI's substantial cash rewards if your tip-off leads to a conviction.

Go on – grass 'em up.


CHECK OUT
POSSIBLE SIGHTINGS
IN SICILY -
SEE INTERNATIONAL
BUREAU
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
Department of Virtual Crime
Application for arrest/custody
Applicable under section 2 of the prevention of videogame crimes act 1987
Date of photograph 2000
First name Luigi
D.O.B. 9/3/54
Last name Gotti aka 'Stone Face'
Middle name Corrado
Race W/Italian
Last known address The Bada-bing Club Highway 46 New Jersey
Occupation 'Plumber' / Exterminator
Eyes Blue
Weight 184
Sex Male
Charge level Misdemeanor Felony X
Height 5'9"
Complexion Swarthy
Warrant served (date) Oct 1987
Hair Black
Distinguishing features Extensive cosmetic surgery to disguise true appearance; False mustache / hairpiece / clip-on nose
Charge Racketeering; Murder (27 counts); Extortion; Narcotics distribution; Contract assassination; Shoplifting
Previous convictions (continue on reverse if necessary) Late payment of parking fines (2 counts) Overenthusiastic use of a vacuum cleaner
Date 04-12-02
Date 7-12
Filed by
Approved by VP Organized Crime Office
Reward offered 2,000,000
7'6"
7'0"
6'6"
6'0"
5'6"
5'0"
4'6"
4'0"
3'6"
3'0"



Date of photograph
1992
Department of Virtual Crime
Application for arrest/custody
Applicable under section 2 of the prevention of videogame crimes act 1987
Last name
Aran
First name
Samus
D.O.B.
Unknown
Race
Unknown
Middle name
Peter
Last known address
Tellon Gender Reassignment Clinic
Brazil
Occupation
Bounty hunter
Eyes
Blue
Charge level
Misdemeanor
Felony
Warrant served (date)
X
Height
6'1"
Weight
I,411b
Complexion
Fair
Sex
Lady
Hair
Blonde
Distinguishing features
Armored clothes; Right-handed; Pixie eyes
Charge
Impersonating a man; Illegal shoulder pads;
Unnatural acts of contortion
Previous convictions (continue on reverse if necessary)
Carrying concealed firearm;
Wearing a bikini on a spacecraft
Hunting an endangered species
Reward offered
10,000
Filed by
Approved by
Date
8-9-94
Date
IL 483 0228
Department of Virtual Crime
Application for arrest/custody
Applicable under section 2 of the prevention of videogame crimes act 1987
Date of photograph
Last name
Dink
First name
Link
Middle name
Rinkydink
D.O.B.
various
Last known address
Kokiri Village
Hyrule Field
Canada
Height
5'0"
Weight
108Lb
Occupation
Hero / Adventurer
Hair
Yellow
Complexion
Yellow
Sex
Boy
Eyes
Black
Race
Goblin
Distinguishing features
Giant head; Extravagant cowlick;
Stumpy arms (2); Vestigial legs (2)
Charge
Running while carrying a sharp object;
Illegal archery; Burglary (7,343 counts)
Cruelty to pigs
Charge level
Misdemeanor
Felony X
Warrant served (date)
Dec 2002
Previous convictions (continue on reverse if necessary)
Criminal damage to a temple (47 counts)
Theft of masks; Abduction; Altering flow of time without permission.
Cruelty to chickens; Lack of fairy
Reward offered
35,000
Filed by
Agt S Motes
Date
12/14/02
Approved by
Yamauchi
Date
IL 483 0228
Department of Virtual Crime
Application for arrest/custody
Applicable under section 2 of the prevention of videogame crimes act 1987
Last name
First name
Middle name



Department of Virtual Crime
Application for arrest/custody
Applicable under section 2 of the prevention of videogame crimes act 1987
Last name
Smith
First name
Zebediah
Date of photograph
Jan 97
Middle name
Thaddeus Mordecai Mario
Last known address
St Bartholomew Halfway House
Lower 6th
Brooklyn
D.O.B.
Nov 16 1952
Height
4' 8"
Hair
Brown
Weight
229lb
Complexion
Dark
Occupation
Plumber
Sex
Male
Distinguishing features
Permanent facial hair
Eyes
Blue
Race
White/European
Charge
Vandalism; Graffitti; Spreading communicable disease via untreated water supply device
Previous convictions (continue on reverse if necessary)
Assault; Attempted Fratricide; Poor fashion sense; Breaking and entering; Theft of a motor vehicle; Stalking; Unhygienic toilet habits
Reward offered
50,000
Charge level
Misdemeanor
Warrant served (date)
APPLICATION FILED
Filed by
Approved by
Department of Virtual Crime
Application for arrest/custody
Applicable under section 2 of the prevention of videogame crimes act 1987
Last name
Gex
Middle name
Saddam
First name
Adolf
Last known address
No fixed abode
D.O.B.
March 9 1995
Date of photograph
1997
Height
2' (w/ Tail)
Hair
None
Weight
15lb
Complexion
Green / Yellow
Occupation
Unemployed
Sex
Hermaphrodite
Eyes
Two
Race
Worm
Distinguishing features
Tail (one)
Ability to stick to walls / ceilings / tire treads
Charge
Criminal damage to the platform game genre.
Previous conviction/s (continue on reverse if necessary)
Unauthorized appearance on a magazine cover; Fraud
Vagrancy; Begging; Intoxication in a public place;
Underage drinking; Soliciting
Reward offered
75,000
Charge level
Misdemeanor
Felony
Warrant served (date)
Filed Mar 7
Filed by
Approved by
Date
3-7-03
Date
NOTE: DIRECTOR IS MAKING THIS ONE PERSONAL TOP PRIORITY PLS.
Date of photograph

'HILARIOUS' GAMES TRIVIA AND JAPANESE SWEARING. IT'S ALL IN...

NGC COMPENDIUM

LEARNING JAPANESE

It's just like school, only with a more interesting language than French.

You know the score – you're playing a Japanese game, barely understanding a single second of it, when you notice that characters keep saying the same things to you, over and over. And the same brief phrases keep cropping up in game after game, as if Konami, Capcom, Nintendo and the rest have all got together in some kind of videogaming Stepford Wives sort of way. Like cheese dreams, Japanese games can be disturbing, but there's always a perfectly rational explanation behind them. And, erm... here it is!



Rachel Ryan – knows her Japanese RPGs, she does. Luckily she's also willing to teach us all a bit of the language, which is, you know, nice.

VIDEOGAMES SAY THE FUNNIEST THINGS...

JAPANESE TEXT	READING	MEANING
鍵 が かかっている	KAGI GA KAKATTEIRU	Locked

This phrase features in almost all games at some point or other. Look out for the first kanji, which gives the meaning away. Kagi means "key," and the whole phrase literally translates as "This door has a key cast on it."

JAPANESE TEXT	READING	MEANING
を手にいれた	O TE NI IRETA	You got a ____

O te ni ireta literally means "Entered your hand." This phrase is not used so often in everyday spoken Japanese, but in a charming twist it still manages to pop up in almost every RPG and adventure somehow.

JAPANESE TEXT	READING	MEANING
こんな 所 で	KONNA TOKORO DE	In such a place!

Japanese game and anime characters seem to have some kind of morbid obsession with dying in horrible places. Saying "...in such a place!" when you die, is shorthand for "To lay down my life in such a place!"

JAPANESE TEXT	READING	MEANING
バカな！ まさか！	BAKA NA! MASAKA!	It can't be!

Two short phrases, one of which you can guarantee will be uttered by any major villain when their plans are thwarted. Both are invariably a preamble to someone getting knocked into a reactor pit.

JAPANESE TEXT	READING	MEANING
くそ！ きさま！	KUSO! KISAMA!	All-purpose swearing.

The strongest you'll see used anywhere are "Kusoo!" (shit) and "Kisamaaaa!" The latter is an honorific title with which to address somebody, but to use it in an incredibly rough voice makes it an insult on a par with 'bastard'. Since the Japanese language lacks the stronger four-letter words, the veracity of the insult is proportional to the size of the hernia the speaker sounds like he's having while saying it.

JAPANESE TEXT	READING	MEANING
無駄だ！ だめだ！	MUDA DA! DAME DA!	It's useless!

These are all-purpose negative phrases, handy for anything from getting your head cut off to failing to tie your shoelaces in a high wind.

JAPANESE TEXT	READING	MEANING
許せない！	YURESENAI!	I won't forgive you!

Or, alternatively, "You'll never get away with this!" Something to say to fill in the silence when your village has just got burned down, which happens a LOT in RPGs.

JAPANESE TEXT	READING	MEANING
大変だ！ 村が...	TAIHEN DA! MURA GA...	It's terrible! The village...

Another common cut-off phrase offered by non-player characters when their village has been Attacked By Monsters™ or Been Burned Down™.

JAPANESE TEXT	READING	MEANING
死ねぇぇぇ！	SHINEEEE!	Diiiiiiie!

Speaks for itself, really.

JAPANESE TEXT	READING	MEANING
行くぞ！	IKU ZO!	Let's go!

Can be said to mean exactly that, but this phrase is also used as a prelude to kicking someone's teeth in.



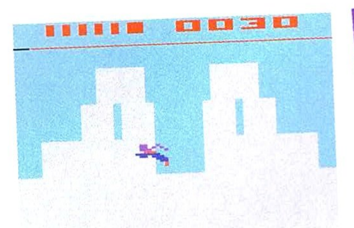
JAPANESE TEXT	READING	MEANING
やった！	YATTA!	Yay! or I did it!

Usually said after a lot of bouncing up and down and making a peace sign with the fingers. By Chinese schoolgirls.

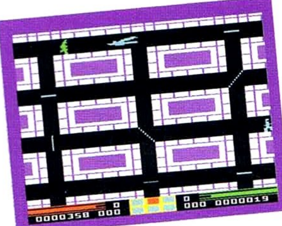
THE EVOLUTION OF...
SUPERHEROES

Mild–mannered Clark Kent: Guilty of virtually every computer crime we have a law for.

1 SUPERMAN (ATARI)
Super power: Lex is on the rampage, the bridge has been bombed, and that ditzy Lois Lane is busy wandering into trouble. Who you gonna call?
Secret weakness: In the two-player mode, one person moves Supes up and down, the other moves him left and right.



2 SUPERMAN (SPECTRUM)
Super power: Fight crime like only Superman can – by shooting laser beams out of your eyeballs, bouncing them off angled mirrors that pop up at random intervals.
Pretty obvious weakness: Just look at it! Look at the state of it! Man of Steel? More like Man of Flickering Purple Graphics.



3 BATMAN
Super power: With the bequiffed bodybuilder proving as big a guarantee of quality as the Army Men logo does these days, Batman's 3D puzzle-adventure rescued the superhero community from complete and utter gaming disgrace.
Bump to the head: Giant lion-men? Mutant space-dogs? Help!

4 SUPERMAN (AGAIN)
Super power: Available on every format at the time, from Atari ST to the old MSX, Acorn Electron to the IBM PC. It was a rubbish shoot–'em–up.
Kryptonite: Every time you died, you had to load the whole level again, which took ages if you had one of the cassette-tape versions.



5 SUPERMAN (ARCADE)
Super power: It's just like Final Fight or Streets of Rage, except you control a bloke who can float in the air while dishing out the fisticuffs. With shoot-'em-up levels as well!
Dark side: Superman looks incredibly camp when he hangs in the air. Come to think of it, he looks fairly lordish in films, TV and comics.

6 X-MEN
Super power: Take a successful multiplayer fighting game, replace all the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles with X-Men characters, and you've got a winner.
Mutation: Up to six players crowding round the arcade machine made for interesting injuries from flying elbows during special moves.

7 SPIDER-MAN
Super power: For the first time since Batman, a comic book hero stars in a game that people could actually tolerate for more than ten minutes.
Secret identity: Despite being based on the Tony Hawk's Pro Skater engine, there's no skateboarding in it.



8 SUPERMAN (N64)
Career criminal: Living proof that the only good Superman game is a Superman game that gets cancelled before it can escape into the shops.
High point: Solve my maze! In setting his fiendish trap, Lex Luthor inadvertently keeps a games magazine in cheap jokes for an entire year.

NGC TOP10

HEROES THAT STAN LEE JUST HASN'T GOT ROUND TO INVENTING YET...

1 ULTRA TRAMP
Armed with a 1.5 litre bottle of Lambrini and a heady aroma of stale urine, Ultra Tramp is a true urban hero.

2 JOYRIDE BOY
Born with the ability to start any motor vehicle, drive it until its tyres explode, and set it alight outside a block of flats.

3 SPITTO
After being gobbed on by a radioactive OAP, Spitto found he could propel saliva over prodigious distances.

4 THE AMAZING WEDGIE
His powerful grip means he can pull a man's underpants right up around his ears.

5 SLUSHMAN
Able to induce an absolute blinder of a headache at will. Don't make him angry, though. He'll freeze your brain.

6 RAKEMAN
The tallest man in the world, by some 400 metres. Unfortunately Rakeman is also as thin as a blade of grass.

7 BACTERIA BOY
The kid nobody wanted to sit next to at school, lest he infect them. But the last laugh is his – the lurgy is real!

8 LUBE LADY
Able to degrease a car engine in ten seconds flat. Not exactly a great deal of use in most circumstances.

9 THE INVINCIBLE INCONTINENTO
His awesome power can poison water supplies using only half-digested, undercooked chicken.



10 PRAM-FACED COUNCIL ESTATE GIRL
Pram-face is to Joyride Boy as Cat Woman is to Batman.

BLORK!

It might be the kind of tedious, labour-intensive experience even Hercules would balk at, but once you've negotiated the online setup there's a whole world of adventuring craziness out there. We've gone online to bring you a taster of what to expect if you haven't already. And if you're signed up, then we'll see you out there…







PHANTASY FORUM

From Phantasy to reality… we fire up the PAL version and go for an online *PSO* party. Join us!



If you hadn't guessed by now, we love *Phantasy Star Online* – and we want you to love it too. Over the coming months (and probably beyond) we'll be inviting you to join us in celebrating the game's wonderful sense of community.

We'd like you to dissect the game with us. To share your experiences, tell us where you found your rare items, and fill us in on your battle tactics and levelling tricks. More importantly, we'd like you to join us online for some hearty Gibbon-smashing, or maybe some item-trading and a spot of footie in the game lobbies. Whatever – check the bottom of the page for details on how you can get involved.



GET INVOLVED…

Phantasy Star Online is a huge game, so we'd like you to share your thoughts on the following with other *PSO*-playing **NGC** readers…



RARE ITEMS

There are so many things to collect it's ridiculous. If you find anything rare or interesting we want you to tell us about it. What is it? Is it any good? What uses does it have? Tell us where you found it, what level you're at, which enemy you killed (if any) to get it, and – more importantly – the difficulty level of the game and what your character's Section ID is.

BUGS AND GLITCHES

If you've found any freaky incidents or factors which have led to a game being cut off or frozen, let us know so others can avoid a similar fate. Not all bugs turn out to be bad, however – if you find anything weird or interesting on your adventures fill us in. NOTE: Anything 'freaky' that involves cheating or duping will be sent back to you wrapped around a bloody pig head. Or something equally hideous.

TIPS AND TACTICS

Tell us if you've found ways of beating bosses quickly, or any team tactics that help you progress through levels. What do you think the best combination of classes are in any given team, and why? Let us know about anything that you think gives you the edge.

LEVELLING TRICKS

Levelling up is a very lengthy process. Have you discovered any sneaky tricks to speed it up? Which enemies give you the most EXP, for example? Do you have a preferred routine you follow offline to help build your stats?

MAGS

The evolution of Mags is a complex and tricky business.

CHARACTER OVERVIEW

Once you've got yourself set up, you'll need to create your character. You'll have important choices to make here, as the class you choose determines the equipment you can use and the style of play you'll adopt for the rest of the game.

FORCE





The toughest of the classes to get to grips with. Initially pretty useless, their ATP is weaker than any other class – forcing you to fight from a distance with depleting magic stocks in order to participate. They are, in our opinion, the most rewarding of all classes, though. Once you get support techniques for healing and boosting, your role becomes more than just attacking, but healing and reviving too.

RANGER



The most balanced of character classes, in terms of Health, Techniques, Power and Accuracy. They're more proficient with ranged weapons such as mechguns and rifles, but they can also use a number of melee weapons to good effect. The human characters also have a decent range of techniques at their disposal. They're invaluable in boss encounters because they can hit practically anything from anywhere and are vital for support in areas such as the Ruins, where it's easy to get overwhelmed. It's a good idea to take one of these guys with you.





HUNTER



The most basic of all character types, Hunters form the brute force of any party. Close combat is their forte, and they have complete access to the game's most powerful melee weapons – many of which allow you to hit multiple times with a single swipe. Their fighting stances are also more versatile, with some weapons allowing you to take a step back on the third strike of a combo – giving you a second or two to evade the counterattack. A great choice for beginners.



Which Mag is your favourite? How did you get it? What items does it like eating most? Which do you think is the best for which class and why? Found a rare Mag anywhere? Tell us!

HUNTERS' QUESTS

Which ones are the best for EXP? Have you found any secrets hidden away in them? What about the downloadable quests – we know there are some that can be played in order to acquire some of the more obscure items and we want you to tell us about them.

CONTACT US

If you want to go questing with some of the **NGC** team then head on over to Spica: 07-01 on the EU servers. You can also check out the gamesradar.com forums for any **NGC**/*PSO* posts to find out when you can meet us. As for tips and tricks from the list above (or any other gems you want to share), mark up any emails or letters as **Phantasy Forum** and send them to either ngc@futurenet.co.uk or the usual address (**NGC**, 30 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 2BW). Be seeing you…



GETTING CONNECTED

What do I need?
A broadband or modem adaptor and a nearby phone socket to connect it to. A valid Internet Service Provider (ISP) and the relevant details enabling you to connect to it. The connection telephone number, your user ID and password are all the details you need.

Which ISPs work best?
We know that AOL won't work. We use Freeserve at home and Virgin.net in the office. Unfortunately, it took us ages to get them to work properly. One of our Virgin accounts worked fine, for example, while another refused to connect at all.

My ISP works fine on my PC but not for *Phantasy Star*. Why not?
As we discovered, this could boil down to a number of reasons. Firstly, check your details have been entered correctly. If they have, try using an alternate connection number (phone your service provider for this – or look for a different one online). Lastly, try using a different Provider slot on the Provider Options screen. For some reason, only Provider 3 worked for us.

I keep getting told that the 'line is busy'. Or I get through but can't connect to the DNS server. What's, going on?
Again, try using a different Provider slot. Alternatively, try registering a new ISP for free over the internet, or using a different phone number for your existing ISP. For DNS connection problems, when you're editing your ISP in Provider Options, set DNS settings to Manual and type in the two DNS numbers provided by your ISP.

I go to the toilet and when I come back I find I've been disconnected. Why?
Again, go to your Provider Options and set your Line Time-Out to a higher value, or turn off Auto-Disconnect.

I can't get a Hunter's Licence – my GC won't connect to the home page.
Go to www.playsega.com – you can register your licence on your PC. The process is quick and easy – just follow the on-screen prompts.



BEGINNERS' TIPS

The process of developing your character is long and daunting – here are a few hard and fast rules to help you build yourself up more efficiently.



LEVELLING UP

When playing online as a weak, low-level character, it's best not to get too close to massive swarms of enemies, but you need to attack in order to gain valuable EXP. In our experience, it's best to wander the level's arenas making sure you score one hit on every enemy that appears. When higher-level characters finish them off, you'll receive a share of the EXP. It will also make getting to the EXP-heavy bosses a much quicker process.

OFFLINE MODE

Essential to begin with. You'll need to go through each level in turn in order to be able to access the levels whenever you want. It also means you'll get all the EXP in a level to yourself – as well as all the items. Make sure you pick everything up initially, as you'll be able to sell them on when you get back to Pioneer, thus helping to boost your funds. As a rule we tend to make one run through the forest or caves before going online – just to boost our EXP quota. At higher levels, this can be done relatively quickly.



HUNTERS QUESTS

A great source of cash. Going through each in turn, the CPU characters will give you the basic info on tactics you may not be aware of. At the end of each quest there's a reward – and by the time you've sold the items you've collected, you'll be substantially better off. Many of the quests are essential to get weapons and some of those elusive rares.

NGC MEETS...

Here's who we've met online this month – and a very pleasant bunch of folk they are, too.



JEFFERSON **CLASS:** ***HUnewearl*** **LEVEL:** ***13***

Chose HUnewearl because he wanted a Hunter that could pull off techniques. His favourite *PSO* level is the Forest because it's the most accessible to all users – you go there straight from the start. He's also a force to be reckoned with when holding daggers…



CARDENAS **CLASS:** ***RAcast*** **LEVEL:** ***31***

This android's current weapon of choice is the Sniper +5. He has impeccable online etiquette – taking a beating so that low-level characters can level up, as well as clearing traps and dispensing sound advice. His fave level is Ruins, purely for the music.



KIT **CLASS:** ***RAmarl*** **LEVEL:** ***57***

Kit's been playing since the DC version came out and isn't too impressed with Gamecube's internet teething problems, or Nintendo's inability to provide a decent form of support. Still, Kit's happy to be back home on *PSO* – the teamwork on Ruins is too good to miss.

PHANTASY FORUM

PSO is go! Send yourself down a Telepipe today…

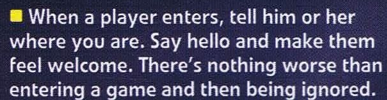
FULLER FLAVOUR BEHAVIOUR

You're playing with real people. Just because you can't see them doesn't mean you can act like a pillock…



■ The lobby is where you all meet. There are loads of people here, potentially from all corners of the globe. Swearing, racism and plain idiocy aren't appreciated at all.

■ If you're substantially stronger than the other players, take time to distract enemies so that weaker characters won't get annihilated in the first few minutes.



■ When a player enters, tell him or her where you are. Say hello and make them feel welcome. There's nothing worse than entering a game and then being ignored.

■ Even better, open a Telepipe so that they can get to your position in a matter of seconds. Having to walk the entire length of a level isn't funny at all.



■ Don't go around killing everything in one go (if you're that powerful). Instead, let other characters build up their strength by getting some hits in first.



■ Not everyone has the same abilities. If you're an android, seek out traps before people stumble into them, or as a Force, boost your party's attack and defence.



■ Not everyone will be as knowledgeable as you. Give them hints and tips as you're battling. The better they are, the quicker you get to those levels and to the boss.



■ Be polite. When someone gains a level a pat on the back is always in order. If someone resurrects you, show your appreciation with a quick thank you.



■ While it's always worth picking up items to sell on later, there are many things that you simply won't need. If someone wants something you don't, give it to them.



■ Bosses are a brilliant source of EXP. Always wait until all your party are ready. There's nothing worse than going through a level only to be denied the last battle.



■ Again, look after weaker characters. If they die and you don't resurrect them, they won't get any EXP. Always make sure you're fully stocked up.



■ Had a good game? Enjoyed your time with the people you played with? Give them your Guild Card. With a Guild Card, you'll always be able to find your mates.

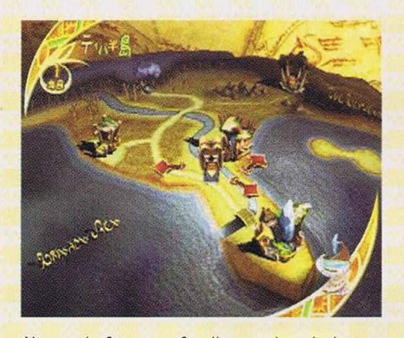


Justin Keeling gets down with gaming goss from the pumping heart of Japan. Have it!



△ A big daddy of a crystal. These keep the evil dark mist at bay, and are the reason for the adventure in the first place. Retrieving Mana Water will help restore their power.

FF: CRYSTAL CHRONICLES – STREET DATE AND NEW SHOTS!





Nintendo fans can finally put their little Square voodoo dolls to rest. On the 18th of June, *Final Fantasy* returns to Nintendo! It's been a very long road for Nintendo and Square. But less than two months from now, fans of Square's melodramatic masterpiece will congregate in front of Japan's game stores like moths to a very bright thing indeed.

Our cleverest readers, who no doubt have their fingers on the pulse, might be thinking: 'meh'. It's no secret that the series has been going rather, how you say, 'downhill' since *FFVII* forced you to watch most of the game rather than play it.

But fear not! Square has used the new Gamecube incarnation as an excuse to shake the series' formula to its very roots. What's really getting Japanese gamers' pantie-vending machines in a twist is the fact that *FF:CC* – as we like to call it over here – features real-time combat, a totally new look, and get this – four-player simultaneous play. At once! Smashing!

Our friends over at Square's stupendously beautiful office in Meguro tell us to expect something very, very special. But then they would, wouldn't they? Still, we can't wait, can you? Feast your eyes on these new shots and pray for a speedy conversion to PAL...



△ Expect big bosses to feature heavily with a reliance on co-operation to succeed...





STOMP TOKYO!

Why Japanese gamers are angry this month...





"Why do America and Europe get better versions of Japanese games? Why have developers stopped caring about us, the customers in their own country?" laments Mika Sato, a 19-year-old student and gamer in Game Stop! of Ebisu, Tokyo.

Mika, and many like her, are becoming increasingly aware of a nasty trend we're seeing in the shadow of Japan's recession. As bonuses shrink and the Japanese consumer market continues to decline, many Japanese developers seem to be using the Japanese release of their games increasingly as a testing ground for what many consider the new megabucks territories of America and Europe. Konami regularly releases enhanced versions of its marquee titles in Europe only. Enix's flagship *Star Ocean 3* is practically unplayable because of all the bugs in the Japanese version. But the single worst example has been none other than *Zelda: Kaze No Takuro* (*The Wind Waker*) – those of you who toiled through the Japanese version will be aware of problems that begin to manifest towards the final hours of the game. To add insult to injury, Miyamoto recently confirmed that the English versions would feature improvements to the end-game system. Not just bonuses mind you, actual gameplay refinements! Sheesh...

If even the ultimate perfectionists can't get it right for Japan, what chance do the rest of the developers have? Is this the start of a worrying trend for Japan's gamers, or much ado about nothing? Write in and tell us what you think.

MINI-MONI NEWS EXPRESS

Miyamoto allegedly 'confirmed' in a recent interview that *Metal Gear Solid 4* is due for GC – exclusively – this year. **NGC** would like to point out that this is about as likely as a baboon becoming President of the United States. Hang on…

More crazy rumours point to a new Gamecube *Mario* game due for release in Japan within the year, which could be the fabled *Mario 128*. Don't get your hopes up though. Sources indicate a puzzle twist on the Mario concept, rather than a full-blown sequel to *Sunshine*.



Nintendo released the Game Boy Player this month in Japan. ¥4,500 buys you a little device which sneaks under your Cube, and lets you play the excellent roster of GBA and GC titles in big-screen TV-o-vision. It also lets you play with the display settings. Almost like having a SNES 2. Sniff.



WHAT'S HOT

EIJI AONUMA *Wind Waker's genius. Life does exist after Miyamoto*

MADE IN WARIO *the maddest Nintendo game in history*

NIGHTS FOR GAMECUBE? *Make it so…*

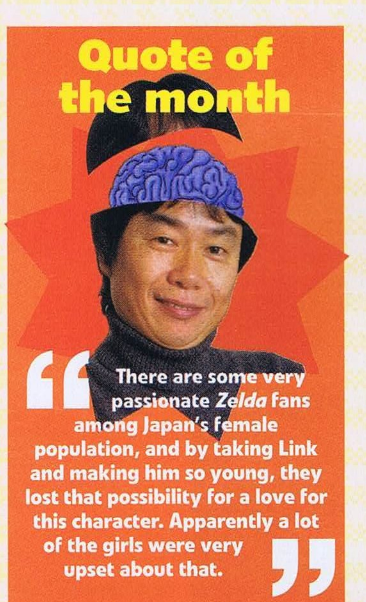
GBA SP ADAPTOR *only available online!*

LEGENDARY JAPANESE GAME WEBSITE QUITER CLOSES SHOP

METAL GEAR SOLID 4 FOR GC

WHAT'S NOT

Quote of the month



"There are some very passionate *Zelda* fans among Japan's female population, and by taking Link and making him so young, they lost that possibility for a love for this character. Apparently a lot of the girls were very upset about that."

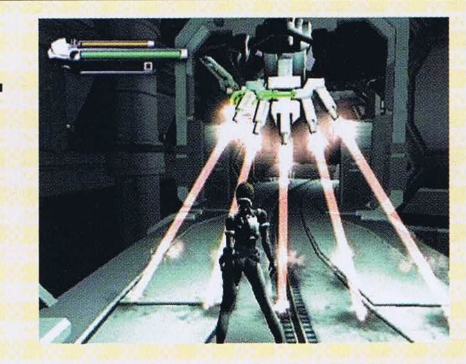
Shigeru Miyamoto, in conversation

DID YOU KNOW?

Nuggets of Japanese culture… Gift Seasons

March and April is traditionally the second-biggest time of the year for game releases in Japan after the New Year. Schools close for spring, and the latter half of April sees Japan essentially shutting down for Golden Week – seven days of various national holidays stitched together into one protracted season. Developers regularly time their biggest hitters to coincide with this season – to wit: *P.N.03, FFX-2, Star Ocean 3, Metroid Prime, Soul Calibur II*, and *VF 4 Evolution*.

Nintendo traditionally dominates the winter, where three gift-giving traditions collide for children: Otoshidama (New Year's cards full of money), a second historical holiday called Oseibo, and lastly Christmas.



The holiday season was ruled by Nintendo, until Sony had the bright idea of going on the offensive with a PlayStation family summer campaign. These days, winter is associated with Nintendo, and Sony brings up the summer – the more budget-minded will resell their consoles depending on the season.

P.N.03, METROID AND SOUL CALIBUR II!



With the recent Japanese release of *Metroid*, Namco's *Soul Calibur II* and Mikami's *P.N.03*, patient Japanese Cube owners finally have real games to sink their teeth into. While sales figures have yet to reveal their side of the story, there's no doubting Nintendo's triple-A adult-themed titles have had a powerful effect.

Japanese developers have woken up to the fact that Gamecube isn't just about the kiddies. In addition to Miyamoto's collaboration with EA on their next generation of sports games, news also reaches us that a new version of Kojima's *Metal Gear Solid* opus is destined for the Cube. What next? *Silent Hill Redux*?



CAPCOM'S BIG FIVE

The first of Capcom's 'big five' Gamecube-exclusive mega-hitters is out, and it's brilliant! But what's the buzz on the remaining four?

BIOHAZARD 4

Release 200X

The Buzz Allegedly based at Umbrella HQ in Europe and featuring a radical new control system, some say we shouldn't expect this until 2005! Insiders are also hinting at a dramatic new take on 'psychological' horror to turn the entire genre on its head…

VIEWTIFUL JOE

Release Summer 2003

The Buzz Shaping up into something very fresh and exciting. Dramatic superhero action with slow-mo and crazy perspective zooming, Capcom have nailed the 'feel' of this game. Watch as other games copy *Viewtiful Joe*'s control system for years to come.

DEAD PHOENIX

Release Summer 2003

The Buzz We saw an updated version recently, and it looks a beaut. *Dead Phoenix* utilises *Starfox*-like control, but with full 360° freedom and literally HUNDREDS of enemies on screen at once. Somewhat inspired by Miyazaki's anime Laputa: Castle in the Sky, it is…

KILLER 7

Release Winter 2003

The Buzz Produced by Shinji Mikami, *Killer 7* is a crime thriller set in four worlds and starring a wheelchair-bound assassin with seven deadly personalities. Despite the hyper-violent visualisation, we're still waiting for any firm details. But dig that art style!

ONLY FOR
NINTENDO
GAMECUBE
BURNOUT 2
MELTING POINT
Original Nintendo Seal of Quality
Contenido • Contenuto
Conteúdo • Content
OK
ELSPA
15+
© ELSPA
LICENSED BY
PAL
Nintendo

CALL ME 24/7, I'VE GOT WHAT YOU NEED!

Providing Every Cheat You'll Ever Need

CHEATS UNLIMITED

A SIMPLE CALL AND YOU'VE GOT THE CHEAT

CHEATS TIPS & WALKTHROUGHS

TOP WALKTHROUGHS PLUS OVER 10,000 CHEATS & TIPS

GAMEBOY

Action Man
Addams Family
B.Bunny Crazy Castle
Blue Pokemon
Bob The Builder
Dragon Warrior Monsters
Dragonball Z L.Sup.Wars.
Fairy Tale (Shrek)
Harry Potter
Mario Land 2
Mario Tennis
Pokemon Blue
Pokemon Crystal
Pokemon Gold
Pokemon Pinball
Pokemon Puzzle Chall.
Pokemon Red
Pokemon Silver
Pokemon Yellow
Super Mario Land
Wario Land 2
Yu-Gi-Oh! Duel Monsters
Zelda: Links Awake. DX
Zelda: Oracle of Ages
Zelda: Oracle of Seasons
Zen: Intergalactic Ninja
Plus Many More...

N64

Banjo Kazooie
Banjo Tooie
Carmageddon
Clayfighter 64
Command & Conquer 64
Conkers Bad Fur Day
Diddy Kong Racing
Doom 64
Duke Nukem 64
Duke Nukem: Zero Hour
Earthworm Jim 3D
Glover
Goldeneye
Hey You Pikachu
Mario 64
Mario Golf
Mario Party 2
Perfect Dark
Pokemon Stadium 1 & 2
Quake 2
Star Wars: R. Squadron
Super Mario
Turok 1 & 2
WWF Wrestlemania '00
Zelda: Majora's Mask
Zelda: Ocarina of Time
Plus Many More...

DR'MCAST

Alone in the Dark 4
Blue Stinger
Crazy Taxi
Phantasy Star Online
Res. Evil: Code Veronica
Shenmue
Soldier of Fortune
Soul Calibur
Tomb Raider 4
Tony Hawk's 2
Plus Many More...

PS ONE

Alone in the Dark 4
Broken Sword
Broken Sword 2
Dino Crisis
Dracula Last Sanctuary
Dracula Resurrection
Dragonball Z: Final Bout
Driver 2
Dune
Evil Dead
Fear Effect: Retro Helix
Final Fantasy 8
Final Fantasy 9
Gran Turismo 2
Harry Potter
Hidden & Dangerous
LMA Manager 2001
LMA Manager 2002
Louvre: The Final Curse
Martian Gothic
Medal of Honor Underg.
Metal Gear Solid
Rainbow Six
Silent Hill
Spyro 3: Year of Dragon
Syphon Filter 3
Tomb Raider
Tomb Raider 2
Tomb Raider 3
Tomb Raider 4
Tomb Raider 5
Tony Hawk's 3
Tunguska
Yu-Gi-Oh! F. Memories
Plus Many More...

G'BOY ADV

Army Men Advance
Breath of Fire
Broken Sword
Castlevania: C of Moon
Crash Bandicoot XS
Dexter's Lab: D. Strikes
Dragonball Z: Leg. Goku
Driver 2 Advance
Golden Sun
Harry Potter C.of Secrets
Int. Super Soccer
Lilo and Stitch
Lord of Rings Two Towers
Lord of Rings: Fel. of Ring
Mario Advance
Metroid Fusion
Mort.Kombat: Deadly All.
Sonic Advance
Sonic Advance 2
Spiderman The Movie
Spyro: Season of Flame
Spyro: Season of Ice
Star Wars Jedi P. Battles
Star Wars: Att. of Clones
Street Fighter 2 Revival
Super Mario Advance 2
Tomb Raider: Prophecy
Tony Hawk's 2
Wario Land 4
WWE Rd to W'mania X8
Yoshi's Island
Yu-Gi-Oh! Duel Monst. 7
Yu-Gi-Oh! Eternal Duelist
Zelda: A Link to the Past
Plus Many More...

PC

Age of Empires
Airport Tycoon
Beach Life
Broken Sword 1 & 2
C&C: Generals
Champ. Manager 2001
Champ. Manager 4
Commandos 2
Dungeon Keeper 2
Empire Earth
I.G.I 2 - Covert Strike
Master of Orion 3
Mech Warrior 4
Medal of Honor: All. Ass.
Midtown Madness 2
Project IGI 2 Cov. Strike
Sim City 3000
Sim City 4
Sims
Sims on Holiday
Sims: Deluxe
Sims: Unleashed
Soldier of Fortune 2
Splinter Cell
Star Wars: Gal.B'grounds
Star Wars: Jedi Knight 2
Stronghold
Theme Hospital
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell
Tomb Raider 2
Tomb Raider 3
Total Club Manager 2003
WWE Raw
Zoo Tycoon
Plus Many More...

X-BOX

Agent Under Fire
Amped Snowboarding
Battle Engine Aquila
Blood Omen 2
Buffy The Vampire Slayer
Champ. Manager 2002
Colin McRae Rally 3
Commandos 2
Conflict: Desert Storm
Dead to Rights
Genma Onimusha
Ghost Recon
Halo
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
I. Jones: Emperor's Tomb
James Bond: Nightfire
Jedi Knight 2
Medal of Honor Frontline
Metal Gear Solid 2: Sub.
Mission to Earth
Mort.Kombat: Deadly All.
NBA Inside Drive 2002
Oddworld: M's Oddysee
Project Gotham Racing
Rocky
Sega GT 2002
Silent Hill 2: Inner Fears
Splinter Cell
Star Wars: Jedi Knight 2
Superman: Man Of Steel
The Thing
Tiger Woods Golf 2003
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell
Tony Hawk's 4
Plus Many More...

PS2

Ace Combat 4: S. Skies
Age of Empires 2
Alone in the Dark 4
Battle Engine Aquila
Blade 2
Blood Omen 2
BMX XXX
C.Bandicoot: W.of Cortex
Colin McRae Rally 3
Commandos 2
Conflict: Desert Storm
Dark Angel
Devil May Cry
Dragonball Z: Budokai
Draken: Ancient Gates
Dynasty Warriors 3
Escape Monkey Island
Evil Twin
Extermination
FIFA 2003
Final Fantasy 10
Getaway
Ghost Recon
Giants: Citizen Kabuto
Gran Turismo 3
Grand T Auto: Vice City
Grand Theft Auto 3
Harry Potter C.of Secrets
Headhunter
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
James Bond: Nightfire
Kingdom Hearts
Legends of Wrestling 2
LMA Manager 2003
Lord of Rings Two Towers
Max Payne
Medal of Honor Frontline
Men In Black 2 Alien Esc.
Metal Gear Solid 2
Mort.Kombat: Deadly All.
No One Lives Forever
Onimusha: Warlords
Premier Manager 2002
Pro Evolution Soccer 2
Project Zero
Ratchet and Clank
Red Faction
Res.Evil: C. Veronica X
Rocky
Shadowman 2
Silent Hill 2
Sims
Smackdown! 4: Shut Y.M.
Soldier of Fortune
Soul Reaver 2
Spiderman The Movie
Spy Hunter
Star Wars: Bounty Hunter
State of Emergency
Stuntman
Summoner 2
Tekken 4
Tenchu: Wr. of Heaven
Terminator: Dawn of Fate
The Getaway
The Sims
The Thing
Time Splitters 2
Tony Hawk's 4
Turok: Evolution
Wild Arms 3
WWE Smackdown! S.Y.M.
Plus Many More...

GAME CUBE

A = 01
Ace Golf
Agent Under Fire
Aggressive Inline
American Pro Trucker
Animal Crossing
B = 02
Batman Vengeance
Battle, Sonic Adventure 2
Battlecry, Robotech
Beach Bandits, R. Power
Beach Spikers
Black and Bruised
BloodRayne
Bloody Roar: Primal Fury
Blue Storm - Wave Race
BMX XXX
Bomberman Generation
Bond 007: Nightfire
Bond: Agent Under Fire
Bounty Hunter: Star Wars
Burnout
C = 03
Capcom vs. SNK: EO
Casper: Spirit Dimensions
Cel Damage
Chamber of Secrets
Clone Wars - Star Wars
Combat Zones - Top Gun
Crash Bandicoot
Crazy Taxi
D = 04
Dark Legacy
Dave Mirra BMX 2
Dead to Rights
Deadly Alliance
Destroy All Monsters
Die Hard: Vendetta
Dinosaur Planet (Starfox)
Disney Sports Football
Disney's Magical Mirror
Doshin the Giant
Dr. Muto
E = 05
Eggo Mania
Eighteen Wheeler
Enter the Dragonfly
ESPN Int.Winter Sports'02
Eternal Darkness
Evolution (Turok)
Evolution Skateboarding
Extreme G 3
F = 06
F1 2002
FIFA 2002
FIFA 2003
Fifa World Cup 2002
Fighting Live
Fire Blade
Freekstyle
Freeride - Tarzan
Frontline (M. of Honor)
G = 07
Gauntlet: Dark Legacy
Ghost Recon
Godzilla: D. all Monsters
Groove Adventure Rave
H = 08
Harry Potter C.of Secrets
Hoodlum Havoc
Hot Pursuit 2
I = 09
Int. Superstar Soccer 2
Int. Winter Sports 2002
J = 10
J McGrath's S'cross World
J.Bond: Agent Under Fire
James Bond: Nightfire
Jedi Knight 2
K = 11
Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer
L = 12
Leg. of Zelda: O. of Time
Leg. of Zelda: W. Waker
Legends of Wrestling 1&2
Lord of Rings Two Towers
Lost Kingdoms
Luigi's Mansion
M = 13
Madden NFL 2002
Magical Mirror
Mario Party 4
Mario Sunshine
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2
Medal of Honor Frontline
Men In Black 2 Alien Esc.
Metroid Prime
Micro Machines
Minority Report
Mort.Kombat: Deadly All.
MX Superfly
Mystic Heroes
N = 14
NASCAR Thunder 2003
NBA 2K2 & 2K3
NBA Courtside 2002
NBA Live 2003
NBA Street
Need for Speed H.Purs.2
Next Dimension: X-Men
NFL Blitz 2002
NFL Q'back Club 2002
NHL 2003
NHL Hitz 2002
Night of 100 Frights
Nightfire
O = 15
Ocarina Of Time: Zelda
OO7 Agent Under Fire
OO7 Nightfire
P = 16
Pac-Man World 2
Phantasy Star Online
Pikmin
Primal Fury - Bloody Roar
R = 18
Rayman 3
Red Card Soccer 2003
Reign Of Fire
Resident Evil
Resident Evil Zero
Robotech: Battlecry
Rocket Power Bch.Bandits
Rocky
Rogue Leader
Rune - Lost Kingdoms
S = 19
Sanity's Requiem
Scooby Doo: 100 Frights
Sega Soccer Slam
Simpsons: Road Rage
Smugglers Run 2: Warz.
Sonic Adventure 2 Battle
Sonic Mega Collection
Spiderman The Movie
Spirit Dimensions
SpongeBob S'Pants: RFD
Spy Hunter
Spyro: Ent.the Dragonfly
SSX Tricky
Star Wars: Bounty Hunter
Star Wars: Clone Wars
Star Wars: J. Knight 2
Star Wars: R. Leader
Starfox Adventures
Super Mario Sunshine
Super Monkey Ball
Super Monkey Ball 2
Super Smash Bros Melee
Swingerz Golf
T = 20
Tarzan Freeride
Tarzan Untamed
The L. of Zelda: W.Waker
The L.of Zelda: Oc. Time
The Simpsons: Road Rage
The Two Towers
Throwdown - UFC
Tiger Woods Golf 2003
Time Splitters 2
Tom Clancy: Ghost Recon
Tony Hawk's 3
Tony Hawk's 4
Top Gun: Combat Zones
Turok: Evolution
Ty the Tasmanian Tiger
U = 21
Ult.F.Champ: Throwdown
V = 22
Vendetta: Die Hard
Vexx
Virtua Striker 3: V. 2002
W = 23
Warzone, Smuggler's Run
Wave Race: Blue Storm
Wind Waker
World Cup 2002
Wrath of Cortex
WWE Wrestlemania X8
X = 24
X-Men: Next Dimension
Z = 26
Zelda: Ocarina of Time
Zelda: The Wind Waker
Zoocube
0-9 = 27
007 Agent Under Fire
007 Nightfire
18 Wheeler
2002 FIFA World Cup
Plus Many More...



CALL NOW

- OVER 10,000 CHEATS AVAILABLE
- THE LATEST CHEATS ADDED EVERY DAY
- COMPILED BY GAMING EXPERTS
- 100S OF QUALITY WALKTHROUGH GUIDES

AGED 16 OR OVER, CALL THIS NUMBER NOW



AGED UNDER 16, CALL THIS NUMBER



CALLS TO THE ABOVE NUMBERS COST ONLY 60p PER MINUTE

NON-UK CALLERS: +44 700 590 7575